PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR M

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Exclusive

BUSTING ROBERT BLAKE

Inside the case that jailed a star

MEN ARE FROM MARS

Ray Bradbury defends the space race

CUPID OR STUPID?

Take our heartbreaking sex quiz

WIN BACK THE FARM

Playboy's guide to sports betting

JAIME PRESSLY NUDE!

Her clothing has left the building

Interview

24 STAR KIEFER SUTHERLAND

"It's like *Dynasty* on crack"

THE YEAR IN SEX

365 days of carnal fun

FIGHT OR DIE

Johnny Tapia, the most self-destructive boxer on earth

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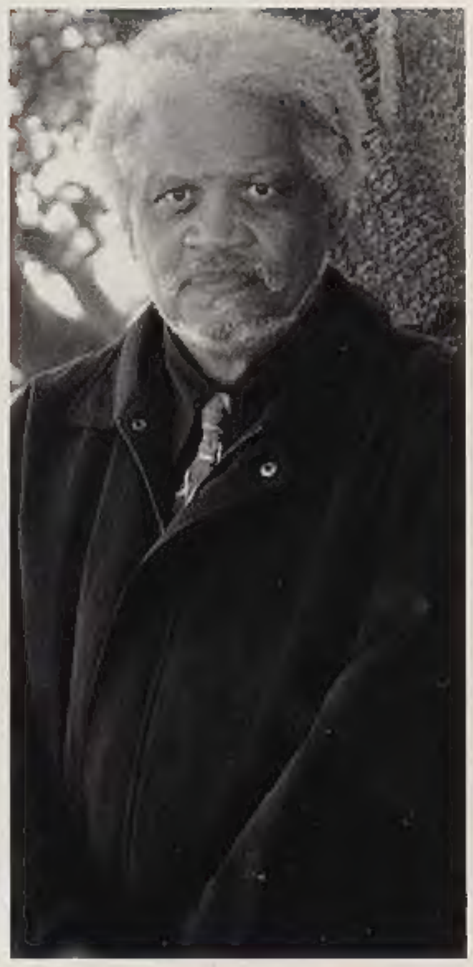
The star of TV's groundbreaking hit *24*, **Kiefer Sutherland** is the subject of a real-time *Playboy Interview* with **Lawrence Grobel.** While some action heroes rely on camera tricks and stunt doubles for their physical prowess, Kiefer's time on the rodeo circuit molded him into a bona fide tough guy. "He told me a story about how he lassoed some girl by her feet on the set of *The Cowboy Way,*" says Grobel, "and I didn't believe him. He said, 'I can show you—I have some ropes in the car.' We went out to his car, and he pulled a bag out of the trunk with six or eight different lariats. He took one out. We were in the middle of my street, and he told me to walk ahead of him. So I'm walking ahead of him, not looking, and he did it: He snagged me by the foot. Then he gave me the lasso and told me I should start practicing with it."

Boxers are notorious for their self-destructive tendencies. But the manic, drug-fueled antics of five-time world champ **Johnny Tapia** are notorious even among self-destructive boxers. "The high point of the research experience," reports **Katherine Dunn,** author of *Fight or Die,* "was when he took me out in his 1950 Mercury. We're cruising in the Merc, and these elderly ladies with silver hair and trifocals are waving and smiling at a shaven-headed, heavily tattooed fighter as they drive by in their Buick. He was so thrilled they loved his car that he waved back. Waving at each other were these dainty little hands and then this big boxer's arm covered with black tattoos."



Our redesigned *Forum* features a provocative essay by **Ishmael Reed,** the author of *Another Day at the Front* (Basic Books) and *Blues City: A Walk in Oakland* (Crown). He wants to know, "Are the Republicans attempting to establish themselves as a white—or Amerikaner—party by disenfranchising minority voters?" The answer matters, he says, because the tactics used against minorities often come back to haunt the majority. Marion Barry's setup, for instance, was a necessary preface to the attacks on Bill Clinton. "While we are spending billions of dollars to support democracy abroad, are we headed for one-party rule here?"

Hailed for his lighthearted touch and innovative use of outdoor locations, star photographer **Patrick Demarchelier** captures **Jaime Pressly** frolicking at a picture-perfect beach on St. Bart's. "When I shoot I always adapt to the situation and to the person's style," he explains. "Jaime has a great personality. Very sexy. That made her very easy to shoot. When I made suggestions about things I wanted to do, she didn't say no even once. She was very cooperative, confident and easy to work with. It was just perfect." We agree.

Ray Bradbury, the universe's most renowned science fiction writer, returns to our pages this month with *Destination Mars* to argue in favor of pushing the boundaries of space travel. He thinks it's time to get a new generation engaged in the endless possibilities of the cosmos. "Some years back the Smithsonian Institution asked me to revise its planetarium program," he says. "I watched one of the shows, and within 10 minutes the dark auditorium was filled with snores. I thought, My god, they're teaching instead of preaching."

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Enthusiasm for space exploration has plummeted. Now the author of The Martian Chronicles argues for a renewed push toward the final frontier. **BY RAY BRADBURY**

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Even in the brutal world of professional boxing, the life of five-time world champion Johnny Tapia stands out. Brilliant in the ring and self-destructive outside it, Tapia has weathered arrests, addictions and even drug-induced comas. But now he faces his most daunting opponent ever: impending retirement. Can the man whose nickname is Mi Vida Loca survive? **BY KATHERINE DUNN**

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Find the answer here.

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The next few months mark the high season of sports gambling, so we took lessons from high rollers, bookies and oddsmakers for the ultimate tip sheet. Learn when to ignore the spread, why an underdog is man's best friend and how you can tell if a prize horse is an ass. Don't bother thanking us; just send us a check after you cash in.
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A decade ago it seemed certain he would go down in Hollywood history as the man Julia Roberts dumped at the altar before hightailing it to Ireland with his best friend. But Sutherland's legacy was rewritten when he took on the role of Jack Bauer in Fox's frenetic hit 24. In a Playboy Interview with a few cliff-hangers, we talk about growing up with a famous dad, breaking up with a Pretty Woman and kicking the shit out of guys in bars. Time's a-ticking—start reading. **BY LAWRENCE GROBEL**

cover story

In the big-screen action flick *Torque*, Jaime Pressly revs engines as a motorcycle-riding villainess. Famed photographer Patrick Demarchelier had Jaime step away from the bike, onto the beach and out of her clothes. She rode the waves in her lingerie with our Rabbit.

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A 50TH ANNIVERSARY FETE AT HEF'S

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Hef hosted a 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Playboy Mansion with celebrities and Centerfolds for a two-hour special on A&E. (1) Mr. Playboy and his girlfriends holding court. (2) Playmate icons Anna Nicole Smith, Bettie Page and Pamela Anderson. (3) Former New Kid on the Block Joey McIntyre and his wife Barrett with Traci Bingham. (4) Event co-hosts Jenny McCarthy and Drew Carey. (5) Sarah Silverman and Jimmy Kimmel. (6) Hef and his 50th Anniversary Playmate Colleen Shannon. (7) Victoria Fuller and Michael Clarke Duncan. (8) Playmate of the Year Christina Santiago and Joey Fatone. (9) Lance Bass and Kelly Osbourne. (10) Wrestling stars Torrie Wilson and Billy Kidman. (11) The always camera-ready Paris Hilton. (12) Singer Blu Cantrell entertaining the crowd. (13) Tina Jordan and Joanie Laurer. (14) Drew Carey roasting the host. (15) Hef and Sean Lennon. (16) Jack and Sharon Osbourne with Evan "Joe Millionaire" Marriott. (17) Playmates in Bunny costumes add a retro touch to the festivities.

A 50TH ANNIVERSARY FETE AT HEF'S

continued

(1) Hef with the Bentley twins, Brande Roderick and Jessica Paisley. (2) Rocker Rob Zombie, a stunning Pamela Anderson and photographer David LaChapelle. (3) Kelsey Grammer and the host. (4) Hollywood icon Tony Curtis and his wife Jill. (5) Geraldo Rivera and his wife Erica with Roseanne and Jesse Jackson. (6) Masters Cooper and Marston Hefner hanging out with the Bunnies. (7) The band Chicago paying tribute to the Windy City, where Hef started PLAYBOY in 1953. (8) *General Hospital* star Kelly Monaco and the guy who made her a Playmate. (9) Lisa Dergan and Jeremy Piven. (10) An impressive trio: Christie Hefner, Barbi Benton and attorney Gloria Allred. (11) Two of the three Dahm sisters. (12) *The O.C.*'s Adam Brody and Dore Grace. (13) What's hopping? Playmate Bunnies! (14) David Hasselhoff with his wife Pamela Bach. (15) Fred Willard and his wife Mary. (16) Testosterone-fueled jokesters Adam Corolla and Jimmy Kimmel. (17) Comic Paul Rodriguez takes a dip in the Grotto.

Dear Playboy

Q&A WITH Q.T.

Your interview with Quentin Tarantino (November) is wonderful. He's one of the smartest and most creative people working in Hollywood. I read the piece twice.

Stephanie Lee
San Jose, California

The only thing I don't like about Quentin is that he hasn't made more

Quentin wins for best director.

movies. Keep rocking, Q.T. But rock a little faster.

Jack Custer
Austin, Texas

Quentin is our generation's Orson Welles. He's brilliant.

Doug Roman
Colorado Springs, Colorado

I'm pleased that the mutt-faced Quentin Tarantino is getting laid. But Quentin, have you ever loved a woman?

Ken Crockett
Austin, Texas

We didn't bother forwarding this question to Tarantino, but we did send Ken a copy of Tina Turner's "What's Love Got to Do With It."

THE HEDGEHOG SPEAKS

In your article about me (*The Hedgehog at 50,* November), [porn director] Greg Watkins claims that I received film roles from the late John Frankenheimer because I introduced him to women. This is an out-and-out insulting lie. As far as I know, the great director was happily married to the same woman for many years. He put me in five of his projects because, as he told the media, he thought I deserved a break. Even for the one film from which I was cut, Frankenheimer made sure I got a screen credit, as Ron Hyatt. So I have received residuals and am listed on the Internet Movie Database for five of his great films. I occasionally had dinner with Frankenheimer. Any girls who accompanied us were always my dates, not his. Watkins left early the one night he saw us. If he had stayed, he would have seen the girl leave with me. Frankenheimer told many people that he thought I was a good actor, and he would often let me see his scripts in advance of production. This includes the *Exorcist* prequel, which he never got to make due to his untimely death. Enough said. Thank you.

Ron Jeremy
Hollywood, California

HOT, HOT HANNAH

Thanks for the Daryl Hannah pictorial (*Hannah From Heaven,* November). My three-year subscription has already paid for itself. I'm sure that after dating JFK Jr. and Jackson Browne, Daryl is ready for someone short, ugly and poor. She is no doubt trembling in anticipation at the prospect of meeting me. That must be her on the phone right now. Nope, just someone calling about aluminum siding.

Bob Canup
Houston, Texas

Bob, we think she has your number.

I've always thought Daryl was a beautiful woman, but I never realized she was a kindred spirit. Any woman who likes being naked automatically jumps up a notch or two on my list of favorite people. I wish I were her neighbor.

Frank D'Herde
St. Clair Shores, Michigan

You didn't mention how old Daryl Hannah is. Regardless of her age, she hasn't lost a thing since *Splash.*

Ed Johnson
St. Augustine, Florida

Daryl turned 43 on December 3.

In Cajun country we like things spicy. And Daryl Hannah is hotter than a crawfish boil on the Fourth of July.

Sean Fluharty
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

You must feel honored that one of the most beautiful and talented women in movies posed for you. Daryl Hannah's pictorial is breathtaking.

Roger Nelson
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DRUG MYTHS DEBUNKED

Stephan Talty misidentifies the U.S. Army base at which troops were given LSD (*The Straight Dope,* November). He says the experiments were conducted at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. The tests actually occurred 12 miles away, at the Edgewood Arsenal, now known as the Edgewood Area of the Aberdeen Proving Ground. When I was a child I lived near there. Many times I observed the troops as they ran the obstacle course. I remember thinking how odd it was that trained soldiers couldn't execute simple maneuvers. On weekends my friends and I would run the obstacle course just to prove that we could do some things the GIs couldn't.

John Canose
Durham, North Carolina

FETCHING FOREIGNERS

How could you not include Sabrina Sabrok, who was featured in the July issue of PLAYBOY'S Mexican edition, in *World-Class Beauties* (November)? You need a better spotter south of the border.

Steven Moore
Ann Arbor, Michigan

And fire the Taco Bell Chihuahua? Never!

Thanks for the picture of Nike Zalokar. My family comes from Slovenia, and

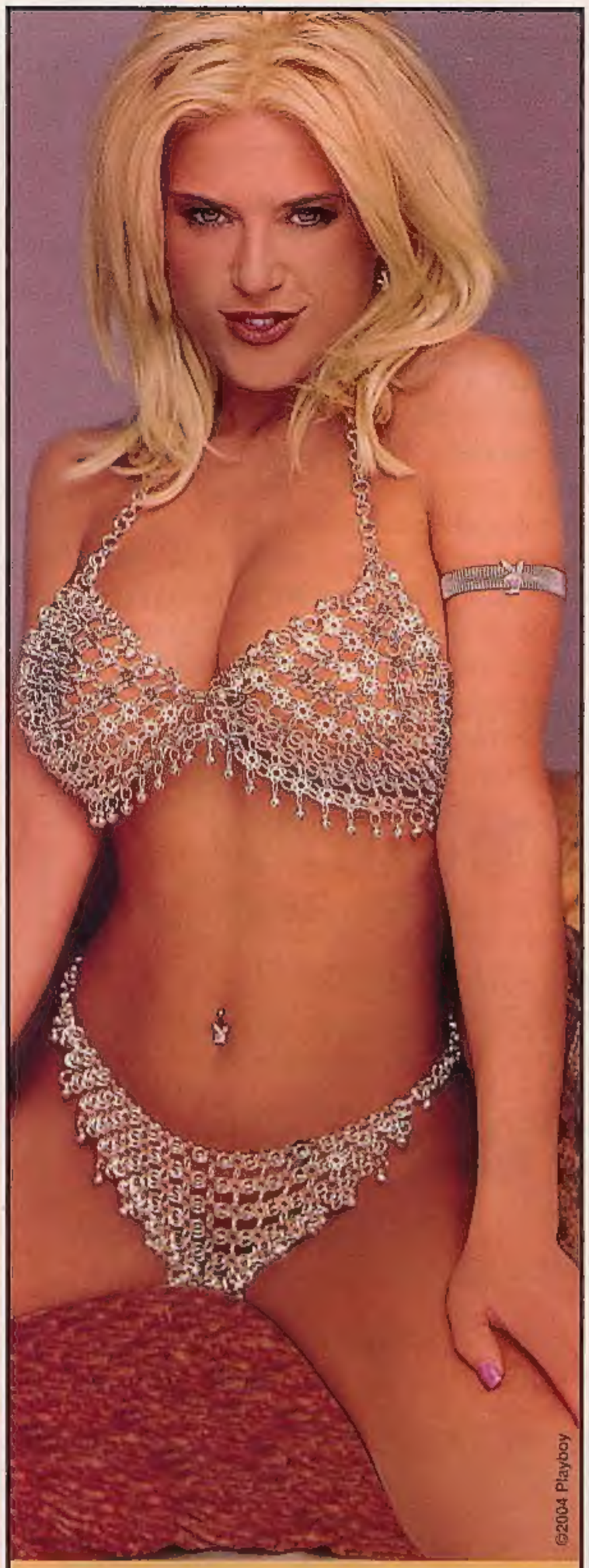
The best sights overseas.

I had no idea such beautiful women lived there.

Jason Zupancic
Iron River, Michigan

Your mom might consider that an insult.

Brazil's Thaís Ventura is absolutely stunning. I never would have thought



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that a set of braces could look so hot.
Peter Montoya
Fremont, California

FROM A WOMAN WHO HATES US
I think that PLAYBOY is degrating to women. It depicts them as sexual objects to be googled at by men. I will be sure to write about you guys in my editorial next week.
Kristen White
Atlanta, Georgia
Grate! Write whatever you want. Just try to spell our name correctly.

THE DIVINITY OF DIVINI RAE
Playmate Divini Rae (November) isn't just beautiful. She's intelligent and well-spoken, too. My birthday is in November. Thanks for the great present.
Colin Roy
Moore, Oklahoma
Wait until you see your Valentine's Day gift.

Photographer Arny Freytag cut off Divini Rae at the knees too many times. When a Playmate has it all, show it all. Chopped pictures are a turnoff.
Robert Davies
Oshkosh, Wisconsin
Don't blame Arny. Blame the censor who thought Divini's ankles were too hot to show off.

WAL-MART'S EVIL EMPIRE
Alice is the perfect representative of Wal-Mart employees: middle-aged, overweight females with fluffy hairdos who waddle around the store in a daze (*God and Satan in Bentonville,* November). They actually believe that Wal-Mart cares about them.
Chris Christensen
Los Angeles, California

I used to work at Wal-Mart. The anti-union video I had to watch was longer than the safety video.
Jeffrey Wilson
Bakersfield, California

Many people, including your writer Dan Baum, don't realize that Wal-Mart donates thousands of dollars of merchandise to schools, clubs and churches. The company also awards scholarships and donates cash to civic organizations.
Nan Chase
Boone, North Carolina

As a satanist I think it's great that Wal-Mart has deceived as many Christians as it has. God's favorite company sells books by Anton LaVey, the founder of the Church of Satan.
Wylie Hnat
Iowa City, Iowa

Dan Baum says Bentonville is "one of the least accessible places in the United States." But Bentonville's airport offers nonstop jet service to New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Nor does Bentonville have only a "strip mall motel." The immediate area has a number of three-star hotels. The residents of northwest Arkansas don't mind having to travel to walk in a gay pride celebration or a million-man march. They can be back in a real hometown the same night.
John Adams
Springdale, Arkansas

I didn't mind when Wal-Mart was opening stores in towns with populations of 30,000 or more. But when they open stores in towns with fewer than 10,000 people, they kill off all the mom-and-pop shops.
Jim Ross
De Pere, Wisconsin

Wal-Mart's birthplace.

My wife recently had a job interview at Wal-Mart. She was given a written test about her morals. Questions included "Do you think that low wages justify minor theft?" and "Do you think it's acceptable to go on a break and come back high?" They offered her a position for 28 hours a week on a totally undefined schedule. Then they told her the salary: $5.65 an hour with a "chance" of a four percent raise. This store is just a few weeks shy of its first anniversary, and already there is talk in town of the local grocery store, bookstore and hardware store going out of business. Many say that anyone who doesn't like Wal-Mart can shop elsewhere. It's a fatuous argument, because Wal-Mart is eliminating all "elsewheres."
Name withheld
Ocala, Florida

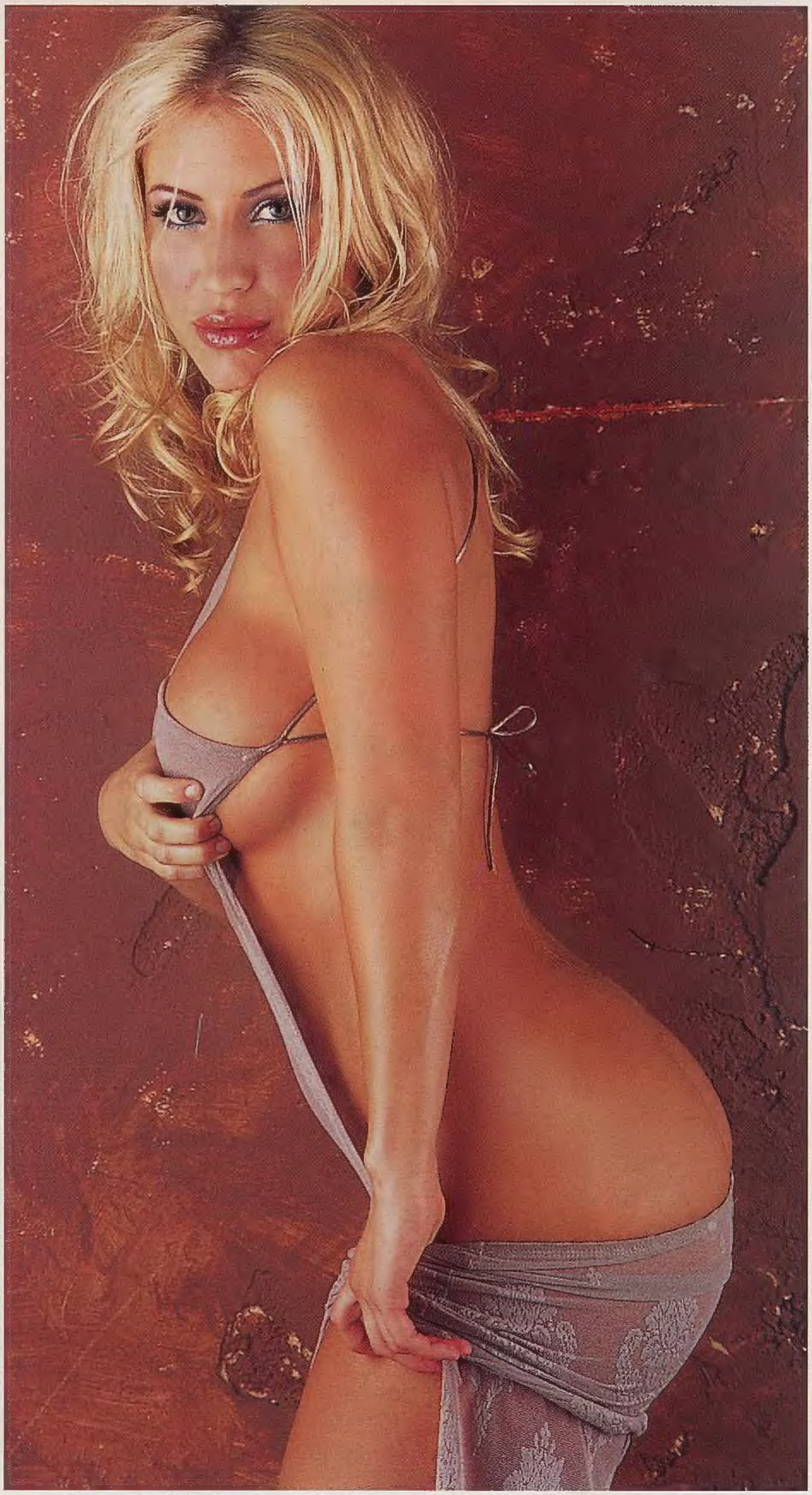
babe of the month

Shannon Malone

We're not the only ones lining up to meet this beauty

Shannon Malone has a knack for putting people at ease, so she's a natural to work the celebrity throng as hostess of Showtime's *The Red Carpet.* "People feel comfortable because I like joking around," she says. We're guessing it's not her conversational skills alone that keep guys coming back for more—she received more fan mail than anyone else in FX history during her two-year run on the cabler's guy-centric *The X Show.* "I liked doing the motorcycle segments because they'd dress me in tight leather pants." Shannon tries to reply to everyone who writes her through her website, Shannonmalone.com, especially those who appreciate her popular pinup posters. "One Marine e-mailed to thank me because he was in the middle of the desert and his bunkmate had my poster," she says. Out in the 3-D world Shannon typically has long-term boyfriends...until they screw up. "My ex's head got a little big when he thought he was a rock star and cheated on me," she says. "I'm dating around, but nothing too serious." So for now Shannon is fine-tuning her acting chops by studying her past performances. "Laughter is the key to staying young," she says. "And if you can't laugh at yourself, you're probably miserable."

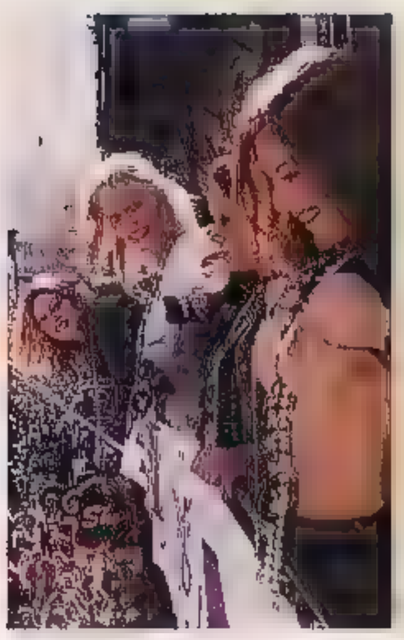
"I liked doing the motorcycle segments because they'd dress me in tight leather pants."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES CREIGHTON

barometer

IT'S FEBRUARY AND...

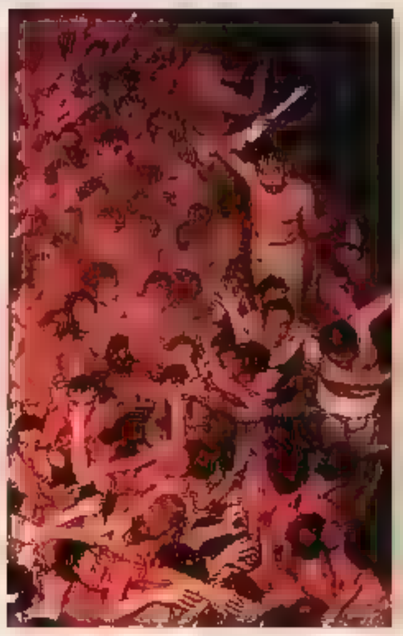


...you know that the time to hit Mardi Gras is a week *before* the Fat Tuesday insanity. Good parades are already rolling, you can still find a fried oyster po'boy (and a clean toilet) in the French Quarter, and yes, gals are already trading bare boobs for cheap beads.

...you're taking the elevator. But contestants in the 27th Fleet Empire State Building Run-Up on February 4 sure aren't. It's a grueling race up 86 flights—that's 1,576 steps. Australian Paul Crake has won the event five consecutive times, finishing last year in—crikey!—a vertigo-inducing nine minutes and 33 seconds.

...you'd like to go sledding. Eighty bucks will get you a top-of-the-line Flexible Flyer—but for just $45,000, Zero Error Bobsled will build you a four-man cruiser capable of hitting 90 mph. Shivering Jamaican crew and 1,500-meter track not included.

...you're filling out your Oscar-pool ballot with authority. Actor, director, sound achievement in a short film—you're picking 'em all. On February 29, when the ceremony is finally over, you'll be walking away with a huge wad of cash. Next month you might even see a couple of the movies.



...you're glad you're not the Naked Man of Inazawa, the poor slob who will be chased, pummeled and generally abused by 9,000 Japanese men on February 17. It's a Shinto thing. Touching the guy delivers a year of good luck—and there's nothing wrong with that.

sports pages

MOUNTAIN OF MUHAMMAD

A MAMMOTH BOOK TRIBUTE TO THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME

And in this corner, weighing in at 75 pounds and 792 pages, the new heavyweight champ of oversize art books—*GOAT: A Tribute to Muhammad Ali*. While the past few years have seen many Ali-retrospective contenders, none has covered the iconic pugilist in such depth—literally. Between its pizza-box-size leather covers *GOAT* packs more than 3,000 photos, as well as essays by Norman Mailer, George Plimpton and Tom Wolfe, among others. "Sports books usually look cheap, and they're made for dummies," says publisher Benedikt Taschen. "So we tried to make ours substantially different. For two decades this man was covered by more writers and photographers than any other person on earth." *GOAT* is the acronym for one of Ali's favorite self-proclaimed titles: Greatest of All Time. "When Ali first saw it he was emotionally taken," says Taschen. "He said to me, 'I didn't know that I was so great.'" The limited-edition slugfest doesn't come cheap: The 9,000 copies Ali has signed sell for $3,000 each, while the 1,000-copy "Champ's Edition," which includes a mystery sculpture by artist Jeff Koons, commands $7,500. Taschen is currently taking orders online (www.taschen.com) for spring delivery. We're told that *GOAT* and former titleholder *SUMO* (Taschen's 66-pound Helmut Newton folio) aren't part of a series of ridiculously large art books. Like others who've stepped into the ring with Ali, Taschen is feeling a bit battered: "It was rewarding but exhausting. I won't do this again."

drink of the month

LIQUID SMOKE

CIGARETTE BANS BE DAMNED! THE NICOTINI FIGHTS BACK

With New York City's smoking ban in full effect, the owner of downtown lounge Suba has invented a way for patrons to enjoy the rush of cigarettes without freezing their butts off outside. It's called the nicotini, made with Stoli Vanil, Kahlúa, dashes of Tabasco and pepper, and a special ingredient—tobacco tea (brewed from tobacco leaves and water). It tastes good, feels better. The only catch? Nobody will let you bum one.

cooler comfort

CHRIS RHINAR

CON EDISONS

HOW TO MAKE YOUR CELL BLOCK FEEL LIKE HOME

If necessity is the mother of invention, prison is the mother of necessity. It turns out that maximum-security MacGyvers rig appliances using toothbrushes, razors and access to the all-important electric socket. Don't try these at home—wait till you get five to 10.

• **Stinger:** A cell essential—an immersion heater used to boil water. The plug is fashioned from a double-blade safety razor, or even two paper clips, lashed to an eraser. A scrap of headphone wire leads from the plug to a heating element (more razor blades, separated by a strip of plastic). Stick the element in water and you're ready to boil. Be sure to unplug the thing before pulling it out of the water; that lessens the chance of an explosion—and of waking up the warden.

• **Tack gun:** This primitive tattoo machine is an engineering marvel. The needle, a sharp piece of wire, is housed in the shaft of a Bic pen. A piston rod made from a bent paper clip operates the needle, thanks to the rotary action of a cassette Walkman motor. It's the last thing you see before waking up to read JAKE'S BITCH on your ass.

• **Cigarette lighter:** A lot of higher thought in prison involves cigs, and where there are smokes, there's need for fire. The handle of a disposable razor, rigged with paper clips, plugs into the wall. Wires, attached to the clips, descend into a glass filled with a water-and-salt solution. Above the contraption, the wires meet in a coil, which gets hot enough to spark a butt. It ain't portable, but it works.

Blueprints for all of the above appear in the book *Prisoners' Inventions*, available at temporaryservices.org.

run and gun

TRIGGER HAPPY

HEY, KIDDIES—STEP RIGHT UP AND SHOOT THE FREAK!

New York City's Coney Island has a tradition of bizarre sideshow acts, but lately crowds have started pulling guns on the freaks. As a carny in *Road Warrior* gear runs through a dank alley, paying customers blast him with high-speed paint balls—and unlike tin ducks, he convulses satisfyingly when hit. Now where's that bearded lady?

employee of the month

SUNNY SIDE UP

ARIZONA SALES REP SHANELLE STEELE SCRAMBLES HER CLIENTS' BRAINS

PLAYBOY: Tell us about your job.

SHANELLE: I work for North American Stainless, which sells stainless steel products to the food industry. We're best known in the egg business—our machines crack the egg and separate the yolk from the white.

PLAYBOY: What's the greatest asset you bring to the job?

SHANELLE: I bring mystery. When people meet me they don't know if I'm a good girl or a bad girl. I've walked into a plant and had 50 workers stop what they're doing. I have a customer who asks me to wear overalls, because otherwise he loses 10 minutes of production. I cannot walk in there in my tight slacks.

PLAYBOY: What about after the whistle blows?

SHANELLE: Then I let my hair down. Sometimes my close girlfriends and I have pajama parties. We'll dress up, drink wine and play games. I like dressing up like a maid or a nurse. Once I went as a cowgirl—chaps with a G-string, a bra and a choker. We do stripteases for each other, but that's as far as it goes.

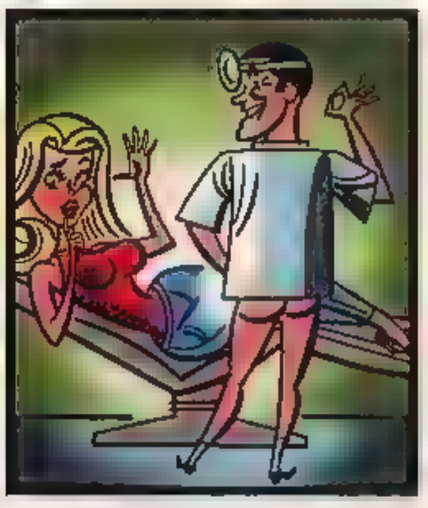
Employee of the Month candidates: Send pictures to PLAYBOY Photography Department, Attn. Employee of the Month, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Must be at least 18 years old. Must send photocopies of a driver's license and another valid ID (not a credit card), one of which must include a current photo.

body of evidence

BLIND HER WITH SCIENCE, PART II

ENHANCE YOUR POWERS OF PERSUASION WITH FACTS

Science can cure disease, split the atom and explore the cosmos. Or it can help us get laid. Just work these undeniable medical realities into your rap and she'll want to play doctor in no time.



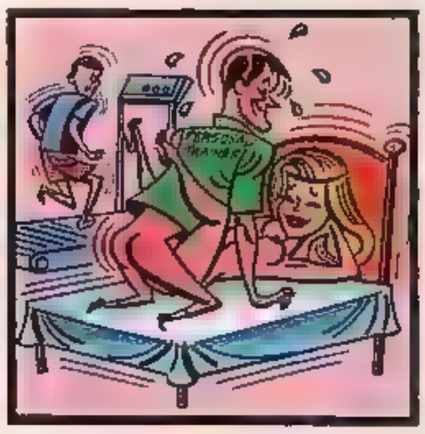
Hypothesis: Blow jobs whiten teeth. Proof: Not only do people tend to brush their choppers before and after sex, but male ejaculate contains zinc and calcium, which work much like fluoride in preventing cavities. Naturally it's best if she doesn't spit nature's mouthwash into the sink. Tip: You'll sound more authoritative if you refer to it as seminal plasma, not man jam.

Hypothesis: Intercourse makes her happy. Proof: According to researchers at SUNY Albany, women who abstain from sex are more likely to suffer from depression. A bonus point: Wearing condoms eliminates the joy-juice effect. Scientists speculate that semen may contain hormones (including prostaglandin E1) that have mood-elevating effects on females, thus making unsheathed sex essential. And that should cheer up at least one of you.

Hypothesis: Implants will make her even happier. Proof: A professor at Florida State University recently analyzed mounds of data on the suicide rates of women with breast implants. Given the demographics and lifestyle of the fake-boob set, women with enhancements should have suicide rates of three times the general population—but they don't! Higher self-esteem probably helps explain the anomaly. Not to mention bigger tips down at the strip club.

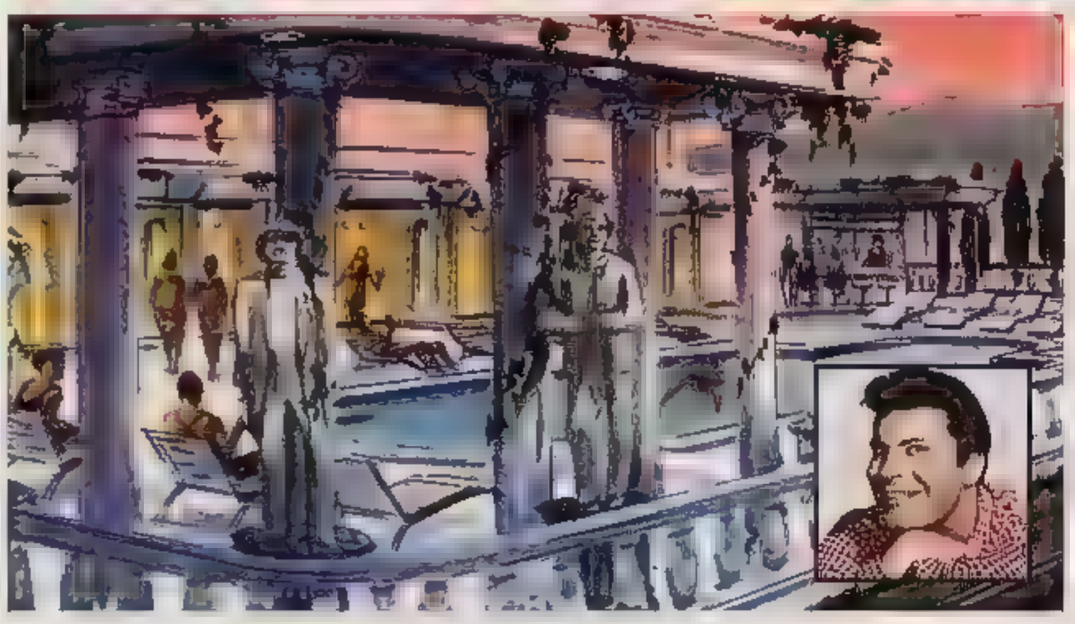
Hypothesis: An orgasm is the cure for PMS. Proof: Scientists, at least, know what goes on inside a woman's head: Prior to orgasm, levels of the hormone oxytocin surge by a factor of five. The oxytocin triggers a flood of endorphins, which numb the pain of arthritis and headaches (even migraines). Researchers at Johns Hopkins Medical Center found that students who even fantasized about sex had twice the pain tolerance of control groups. Women also benefit from a spike in estrogen, a noted PMS pain reliever, after sex. But first, the inoculation....

Hypothesis: Sex will give her a better body. Proof: It's exercise! Fact is, 30 minutes of conjoined aerobics will consume 200 calories: the same as a light 15-minute jog. (Standing will give you both a lift, and you'll approach maximum burn.) It's healthy! During sex her pulse rate will rise from 70 beats a minute to 150 (if you do it right). It's toning! Dr. Claire Bailey of the University of Bristol says that women will have toned tummies and better posture if they engage regularly in sex—with you as Thighmaster, of course.



MITCH O'CONNELL (3)

bubblin' crude

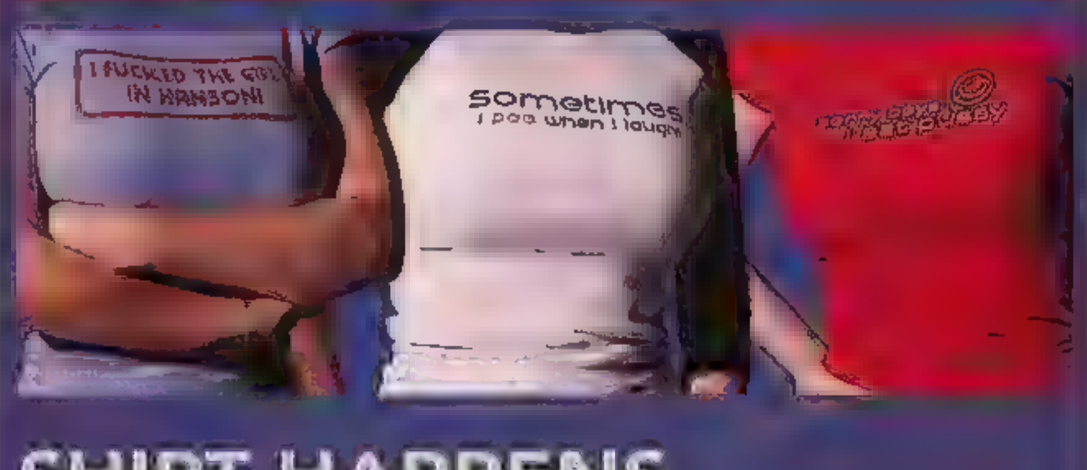


HILLBILLY JACKPOT

STRIKE IT RICH AT THE *BEVERLY HILLBILLIES* CASINO

If they can turn musty old sitcoms into movies, why not turn one into a gambling mecca? Max Baer Jr., a.k.a. Jethro Bodine of *The Beverly Hillbillies,* has a dream, and it's called Jethro's Beverly Hillbillies Mansion & Casino. "No other show lends itself to gaming like *The Beverly Hillbillies,*" Jethro—er, Baer—now 66, says. "The show is about going from rags to riches." Baer, who got the license from CBS, has had the idea for 15 years, and his latest prospect fittingly lies in a shuttered Wal-Mart in sleepy Carson City, Nevada. It'll take $55 million, he figures, to turn the bland space into a replica of the Clampetts' TV palace. Guests will dine at Jethro's All-You-Ken-Et Buffet (which rhymes, by the way) or at Drysdale's Fancy Eatin's, swim in the Cement Pond, get married at Granny's Shotgun Weddin' Chapel and drink at a bar with 181-proof white lightning flowing from a still. And Baer plans to exploit more than lust for nostalgia. "The waitresses will dress like Elly May but be padded like Dolly Parton," he says. Baer expects the casino—and its 200-foot oil derrick belching the occasional plume of fire—to be open come summer. Y'all come back now, ya hear?

tee time



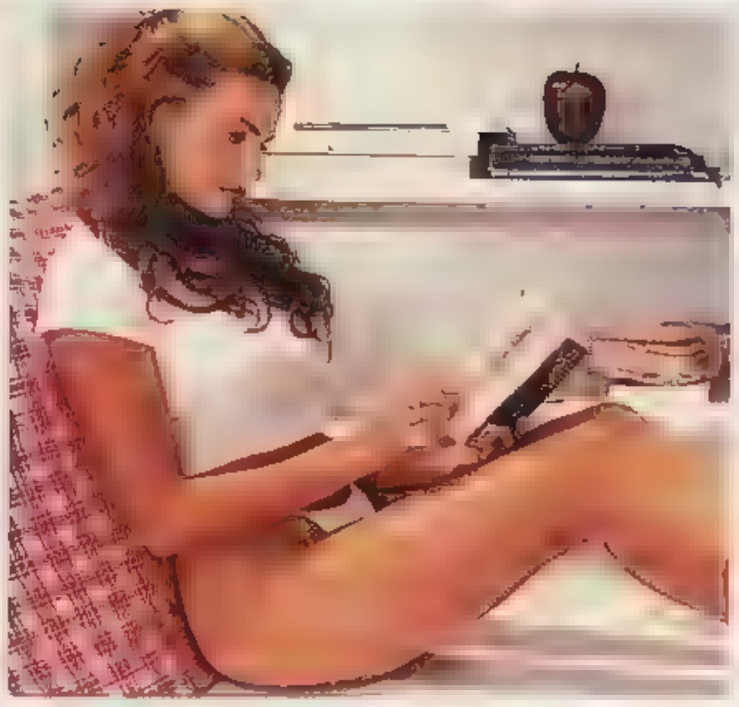
SHIRT HAPPENS

EVEN BLEACH COULDN'T GET THIS LAUNDRY CLEAN

There's more to Tshirthell.com than flogging 100 percent cotton tops with slogans sure to offend 99 percent of the world. As the most visited T-shirt site on the Internet, the company has built a community of those who believe bad taste is a fashion statement. It helps that the online catalog has cute, bare-bummed customers showcasing tees emblazoned with STOP LOOKING AT MY ASS and a wet shirt with I'M CUTE? NO SHIT! plastered on a busty young lass. Counting all available styles, T-shirt Hell has given us 79 new reasons to stare at a woman's chest. Who said reading isn't fun?

RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS



Paper Chaste

16% of 527 Northern Kentucky University undergrads surveyed said they had pledged to remain celibate until marriage.

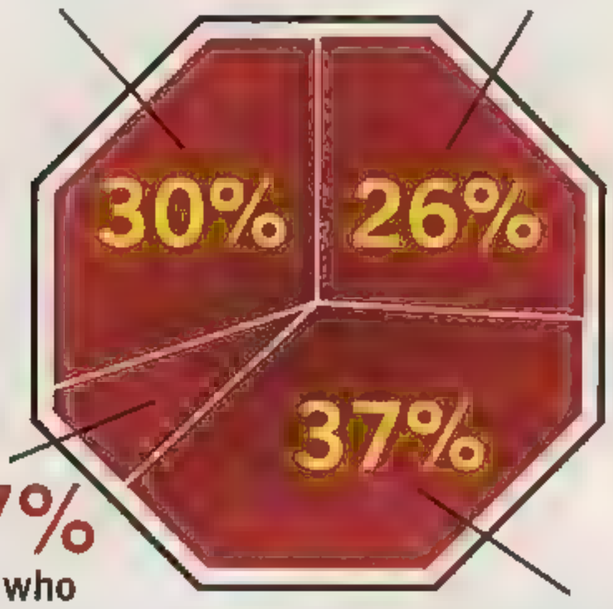
39% of them claimed that they managed to keep the pledge.

55% of the chaste few admitted to having oral sex.

Roll Call

Drivers who stop properly at stop signs

...who stop in the crosswalk or intersection



7% ...who totally ignore stop signs

...who roll through without completely stopping

Black Gold

Milliliter for milliliter, ink-jet printer ink is seven times as expensive as Dom Perignon 1985. To fill the gas tank of the average car with ink would cost about

$175,000

Praise the Lawyers

Sixteen years ago **165,000** people joined a class action suit against Jim Bakker to recover the **$1,000** each of them had contributed to the Christian resort the disgraced PTL evangelist never built. A recent settlement awarded each plaintiff

$6.54

Hasta la Visa Card

Personal expenses of budget-balancing, antispending California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger:

Each pair of his Pasquale loafers:

$5,000

Custom-tailored Giacomo suit:

$3,000

Haircut by stylist Stephen Knoll:

$5,500

Heads Up!

The world's largest bobblehead doll is an **11-foot-tall** likeness of game-show legend Chuck Woolery.

Kites of Mass Destruction

In the first six months of 2003 **45** people died in Lahore, Pakistan in accidents involving "combat" kites armed with razor-sharp string.

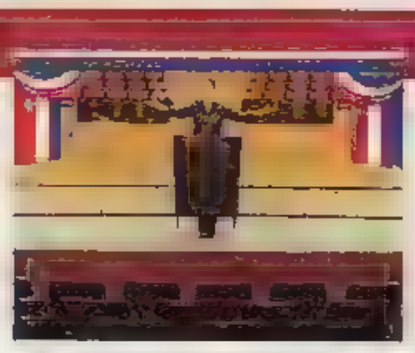
Greased Hog

To celebrate the 100th birthday of Harley-Davidson, a sculptor carved **300 pounds of butter** into a full-scale replica of a Harley V-Rod.

Human Stains

17% of people who get a tattoo end up regretting it.

The Bottom Five



Fewest Votes in New Hampshire Presidential Primary

In 1983 the state dropped a requirement that presidential hopefuls collect 500 signatures to run in the primary. To get on the ballot all you have to do is pay $1,000. Poorest uses of a grand:

199. Richard Reber	1992, Republican	14 votes
200. George W. Benns	1992, Democrat	12 votes
201. A.A. Van Petten	1988, Democrat	10 votes
202. Stanley Lock	1988, Democrat	9 votes
203. Nathan J. Averick	1992, Democrat	7 votes

REVIEWS

movies

"So are any of the other Angels gonna drop by?"

movie of the month

[50 FIRST DATES]

Sandler and Barrymore reteam for a Valentine's Day worth remembering

Hollywood throws us guys a bone once in a while. Instead of Valentine's Day movie choices that include some warm, fuzzy Hugh Grant glop, this year we get Adam Sandler as a veterinarian forced to woo Drew Barrymore again and again because of her acute short-term memory loss. With its *Groundhog Day*–ish premise and *Wedding Singer* co-stars, what we have here is a romantic comedy we wouldn't mind being caught dead at. Says Barrymore, "I like that this movie works for men and women, because it's hard to pull off something thoughtful that's also outright fucking funny." No kidding. Barrymore says that the film's key is its goofy, touching characters. "I identified with playing someone who's emotionally available but, because of her disability, acts different on different days," she says. "There's so much humor balanced with my character being upset and real. One of the most beautiful things in life is that you can be inconsistent, right?" But one constant is her jones for Sandler. "If we work well together, one reason is that he makes me laugh," Barrymore says. "There's nothing to force, because I just enjoy him, and that must show. Going to work is a chance to show how much I love him." Aw, we're feeling warm and fuzzy already. (February 13)

> "It's hard to pull off thoughtful *and* outright fucking funny."

now showing

	BUZZ
Along Came Polly (Ben Stiller, Jennifer Aniston, Debra Messing) Stiller plays an inhibited insurance company risk analyst who makes a big play for Aniston, a thrill-seeking former schoolmate he hasn't seen in years. Zanily sweet romance, blind-ferret jokes and overflowing bathroom humor ensue.	Our call: There's something about *Polly*. Despite its striking similarity to a certain other Stiller-in-love comedy, if you're looking for cheap laughs, this isn't much of a risk.
Barbershop 2 (Ice Cube, Garcelle Beauvais, Cedric the Entertainer) Nothing's changed much at the Chicago clip joint run by Calvin (Ice Cube) and the gang that couldn't cut straight. Expect tales about the old hood and more of Cedric's scene-stealing barber with the Don King do. Eighty-six those Rosa Parks jokes, though.	Our call: The first installment was a cut above average, but a quickie sequel sounds as if the *Barbershop* franchise is just a trim away from an inevitable TV series incarnation.
The Butterfly Effect (Ashton Kutcher, Amy Smart, Eric Stoltz) This heavy sci-fi thriller sends college guy Kutcher time-tripping back to erase his childhood traumas and save the love of his life (Smart) from an ugly fate. Trouble is, every little tweak of his past creates a ripple that screws with his future.	Our call: Dude, where's my existential crisis? Unless Kutcher can pull off the dramatic twists, he's going to wish he could go back in time and make *My Boss's Daughter 2* instead.
Welcome to Mooseport (Ray Romano, Gene Hackman, Maura Tierney) When a former U.S. president (Hackman) runs for mayor of a New England town, hardware store owner Romano decides to run against him. Hackman opens up a bag of dirty tricks, and war erupts quicker than you can say "*Neighbors* meets *What About Bob?*"	Our call: *Moose* might have juice. Everybody loves Romano and Hackman, so it'd be nice if their election-year satire of small-town politics didn't land us knee-deep in moose crap.

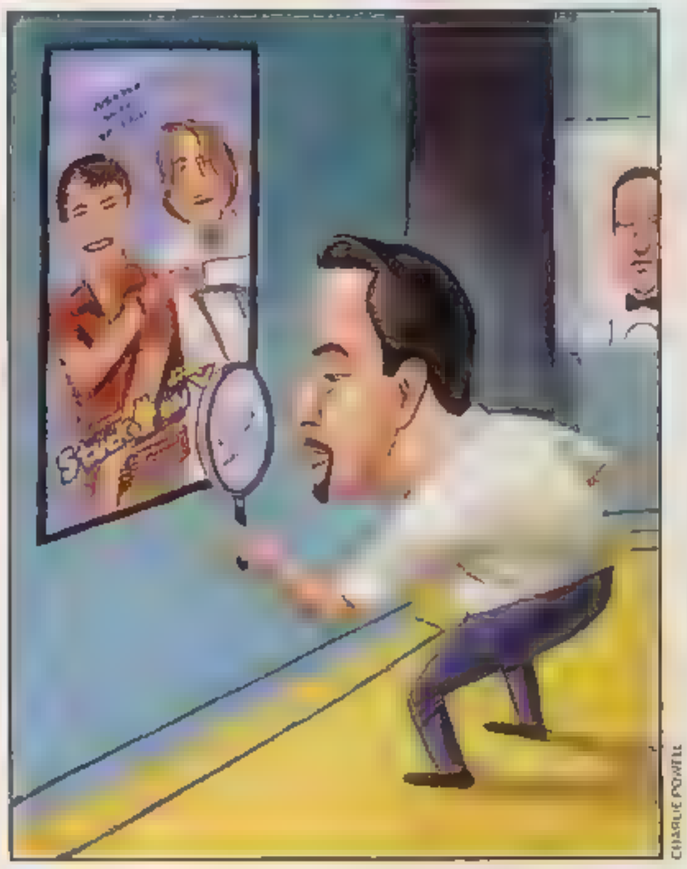
critical mass

[REVIEWS FOR RENT]

When it comes to some critics' gushy blurbs, we've all been punk'd

Those who suffered through two minutes of *Beyond Borders* must have wondered if the critic who declared the soggy Angelina Jolie melodrama "the quintessential romance for the new millennium" had even watched the same movie. But they shouldn't feel too bad—we've all been burned by critics who seem to have more variations on the word *mesmerizing* than they have credibility. If we didn't know better, we'd suspect that David Manning was back on the case. In 2001 Manning, film critic for Connecticut's *Ridgefield Press,* became famous for never seeing a Sony movie he didn't like, calling Heath Ledger in *A Knight's Tale* "the year's hottest star" and declaring Rob Schneider's *The Animal* "another winner." When *Newsweek* exposed Manning as nonexistent, a red-faced Sony admitted that the gushing critic had been invented by a marketing department flunky.

Exit the fake critic; enter the junket whore. Junket whores are real journalists inclined to dispense quotable reviews in exchange for being wined and dined by movie studios at lavish press-event getaways. "Why invent a critic when there is no movie for which you can't get good quotes from people who live to be quoted?" laments Richard Roeper, *Chicago Sun-Times* film critic and co-host of *Ebert & Roeper.* "It sometimes seems that these quotes are spoon-fed by studio publicists, like, 'Would you say "Run, don't walk" about *Radio?*' Or '"*Beyond Borders* is beyond Oscar?"' And the critic says, 'Sure I would.' It cheapens the whole critical process." Hey, it makes the regular ticket-buying public feel pretty cheap, too, which is why many of us are smartening up. Advises Roeper, "If the only quotes in the ad are from known shameless critics, people learn that means everybody else must have hated the movie. And if the quote ap-



pears 10 times larger than the name of the person giving the quote, or if you can't read the critic's name with a microscope, that's a bad, bad movie. Also not a good sign is when you're not sure if the person giving the quote is from a newspaper, a local television station or some odd-sounding source like *Wireless Magazines,* whatever that is."

Here's an even simpler warning sign: Larry King loved it. —*Stephen Rebello*

art house

Monster

Charlize Theron smacks herself with an ugly stick to play Aileen Wuornos, a Florida hooker executed in 2002 for killing her johns. *Monster* owes more to *Boys Don't Cry* than *Psycho.* The emphasis is on how Wuornos was driven by her love for a nerdy lesbian (Christina Ricci), and their relationship is depicted with a sensitivity that rises above true-crime clichés.—*Andrew Johnston*

SCORE CARD

Capsule close-ups of recent films by Leonard Maltin

CALENDAR GIRLS Helen Mirren and Julie Walters head a cast of British actresses in a film based on the true story of middle-aged club women who pose nude to raise funds for a hospital. The plot is paper thin, but the stars are delightful. ¥¥½

THE [illegible]OOLER William H. Macy stars as a loser who spreads bad luck for a living, working for casino boss Alec Baldwin. His luck changes when he hooks up with Maria Bello. This smart film derails toward the end but has great performances. ¥¥½

THE FOG OF WAR Documentary filmmaker Errol Morris chronicles the life of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who served under JFK and LBJ and proves to be a feisty, fascinating interviewee. Reliving the Vietnam era makes this film a powerhouse. ¥¥¥¥

[illegible]RING Scarlett Johansson follows *Lost in Translation* with another beguiling performance, as a servant who attracts the painter Vermeer—much to his wife's displeasure. An exquisite rendering of Tracy Chevalier's novel. ¥¥¥½

IN AMERICA Irish writer-director Jim Sheridan (*My Left Foot*) tells the story of a family's arrival in New York City and its struggle to survive under the cloud of a child's death. An unsentimental drama starring Samantha Morton and Paddy Considine. ¥¥¥

[illegible] More than a dozen characters, from a schoolboy to the prime minister (Hugh Grant), look for romance in London. The writer of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and *Notting Hill* steps behind the camera to pull their strings. It's not perfect, but still enjoyable, actually. ¥¥¥

MONA LISA SMILE Julia Roberts has an ideal role as a teacher who confronts small-mindedness. The rest is so heavy-handed—including the portrayals of her students (Kirsten Dunst, Julia Stiles, Maggie Gyllenhaal)—that it capsizes a promising story. ¥¥

[illegible] Alongside Benicio Del Toro and Naomi Watts, Sean Penn proves again that he's one of the greatest actors alive in this provocative film from the director of *Amores Perros.* The story of three lives that intertwine through fate and drugs is told in nonlinear, jigsaw-puzzle fashion. ¥¥¥

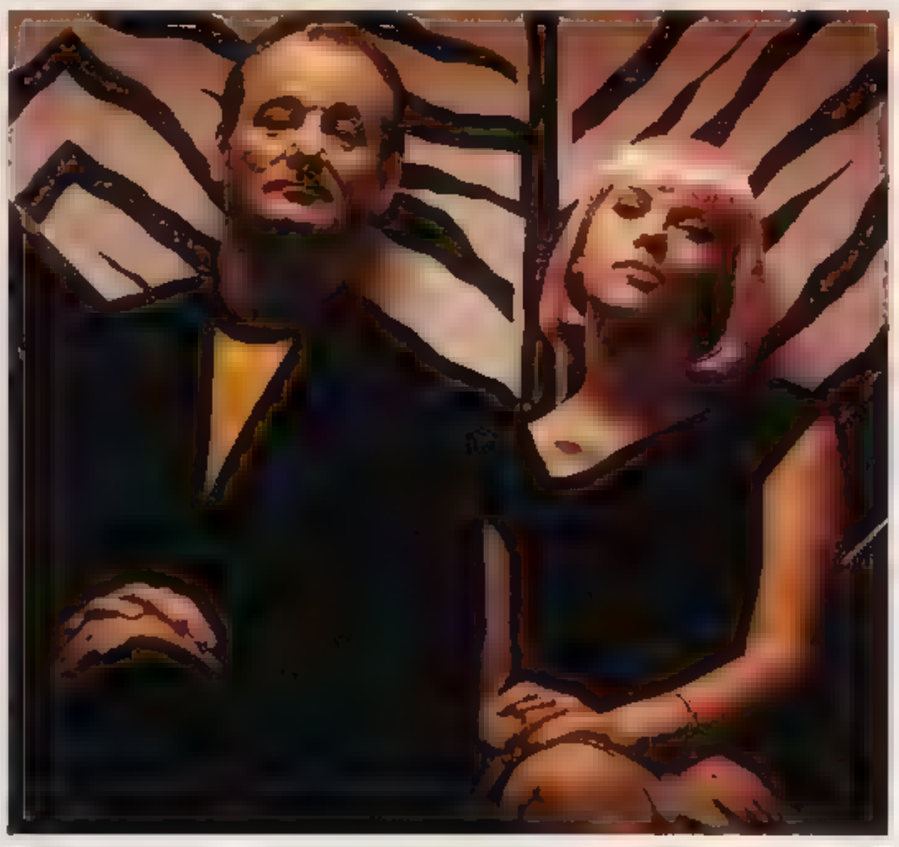
¥¥¥¥ Don't miss ¥¥ Worth a look
¥¥¥ Good show ¥ Forget it

dvd of the month

[LOST IN TRANSLATION]

Bill Murray is the best thing to hit Tokyo since Godzilla

The scenario is ripe for illicit sex: A famous actor is stranded in a foreign hotel with a wistful young woman whose husband neglects her. In most movies the two would be doing the dirty in the lobby fountain by the second act, but writer and director Sofia Coppola has something else in mind in this quirky indie hit, and the experience is enriching. Bill Murray uses every pockmark on his woeful face to terrific effect as the drained actor in Tokyo for a quick-buck liquor ad. Scarlett Johansson, who caught our eye in *Ghost World,* is utterly convincing as the girl who develops an unlikely crush on him. We should all be so lucky. Sparks don't fly as much as they glow, and the pair's mutual need for each other outweighs the lust. Then again, who really wants to see Murray in a steamy sex scene? **Extras:** deleted scenes and a behind-the-scenes featurette about the making of the film in Tokyo. ¥¥¥ *—Buzz McClain*



AMERICAN WEDDING (2003) From a proposal scene spiced with public fellatio to pubic-hair-spiked cake, *Wedding* careens raunchily down paths worn raw by the first two *American Pie* flicks. Jason Biggs and Alyson Hannigan are the happy couple, but Seann William Scott's Stifler still scores the big laughs. **Extras:** Fans of Playmate Nikki Schieler Ziering need the unrated edition, which extends her sexy scenes and offers "Enter the Dominatrix: Inside the Bachelor Party." ¥¥½ *—Gregory P. Fagan*

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO (2003) The last of director Robert Rodriguez's *El Mariachi* trilogy finds guitar-strumming vigilante Antonio Banderas recruited by the CIA—in the form of Johnny Depp—to assassinate an assassin. Meanwhile El Mariachi's brain is flooded with memories of his knife-throwing bride, Salma Hayek. Enjoy the bullet-riddled action, but please don't expect coherence. ***Excesos:*** a CD-ROM game, commentary, deleted scenes and a making-of featurette. ¥¥½ *—B.M.*

FREDDY VS. JASON (2003) Horrorphiles have been clamoring for this rumble on Elm Street for years. They're rewarded with a gorehound's red dream as Jason and Freddy (again played by a revved-up Robert Englund) rip each other to ribbons, though some members of the young cast don't seem to share their enthusiasm. **Extras:** deleted scenes, including the original opening and ending; a making-of featurette; and a cool "Jump to a Death" menu option that literally cuts to the chase. ¥¥¥ *—Robert B. DeSalvo*

AMERICAN SPLENDOR (2003) File clerk and pop-culture oddity Harvey Pekar (played by both Paul Giamatti and the real Pekar) gains 15 more minutes of fame in this art house curio. Documentary, dramatization and animation merge into a surreal biopic of a self-loathing loser who becomes a comic-book protagonist and *Letterman* regular. As original as Pekar is ordinary. **Extras:** commentary by directors Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini, and Easter eggs. ¥¥½ *—B.M.*

second acts

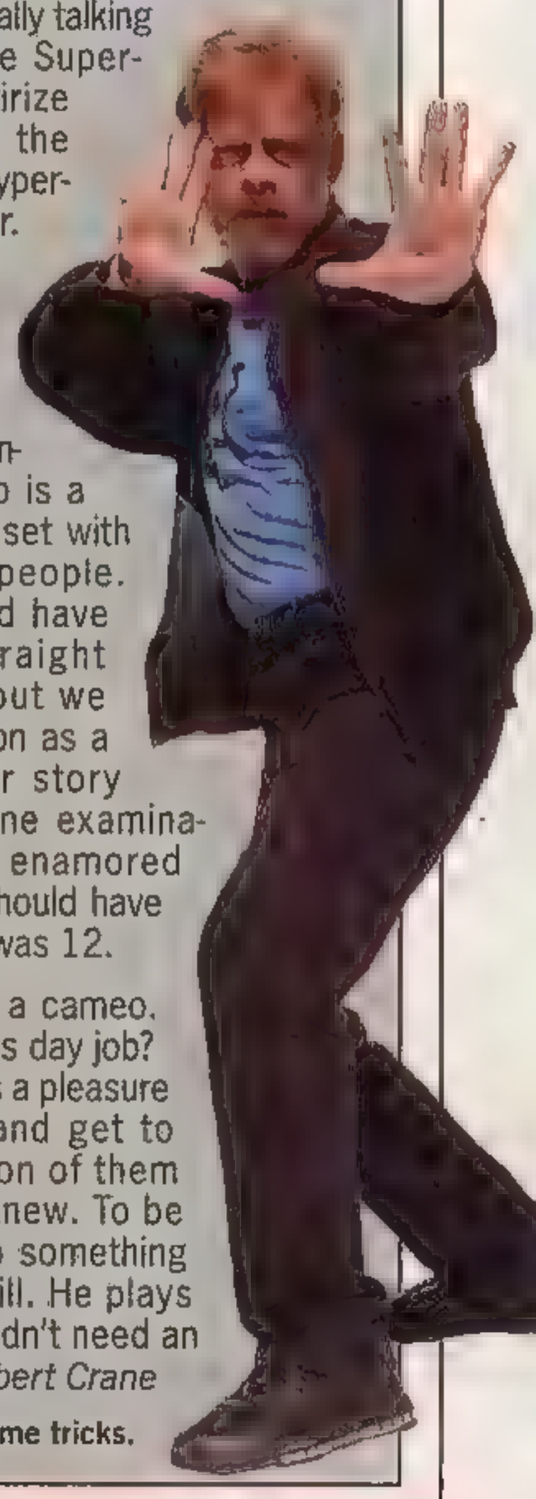
[THE JEDI DIRECTS]

Mark Hamill's mockumentary, *Comic Book: The Movie,* is on DVD this month. Did he use the Force?

PLAYBOY: What inspired this movie?
HAMILL: The first fake documentary I ever saw, *Take the Money and Run. The Rutles* inspired me. *Spinal Tap.* Not to run afoul of the lawyers, I had to come up with my own versions of Superman, Captain Marvel, Batman. Kevin Smith talks about writing a Commander Courage movie, but he's really talking about writing the Superman film. We satirize Hollywood from the standpoint of a layperson, not an insider.

PLAYBOY: Why set it at a real comic-book convention?
HAMILL: The convention in San Diego is a half-billion-dollar set with real, authentic people. The movie would have worked as a straight documentary, but we use the convention as a backdrop to our story line. It's a genuine examination of why I'm enamored of something I should have outgrown when I was 12.

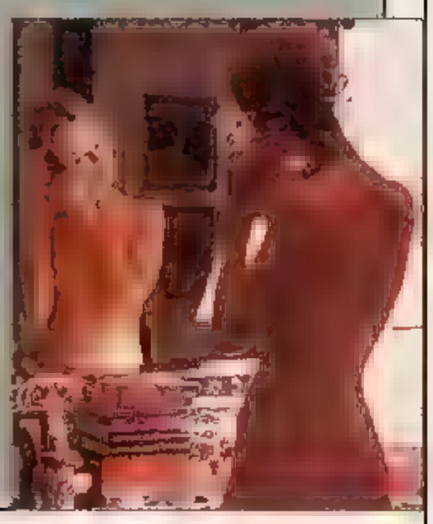
PLAYBOY: Hef has a cameo. Should he keep his day job?
HAMILL: It's always a pleasure to meet icons and get to know a dimension of them that you never knew. To be able to finally do something with him is a thrill. He plays himself, so we didn't need an audition. *—Robert Crane*



Jedi mime tricks.

sleaze frame

Stanley Kubrick captured many wondrous images, not the least of which was a naked **Nicole Kidman** in *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999). Apparently comfortable in the hands of the esteemed director, Nicole seems remarkably unself-conscious. Given her subsequent ascent to the top ranks of Hollywood actresses, we might never see her this way again. We'll keep our eyes wide open, thanks.



cd of the month

[STEREOLAB * MARGERINE ECLIPSE]

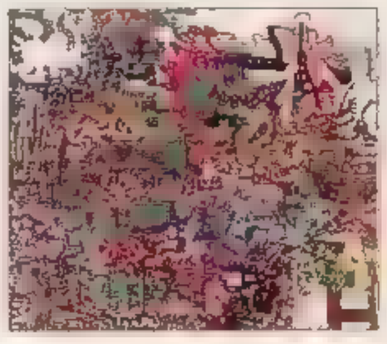
Space-age bachelor pad music lifts off again

It's easy to forget that Stereolab played Lollapalooza a decade ago. A quick scan of the music scene reveals few groups from the early 1990s still making vital music (hell, festival progenitor Jane's Addiction has retired twice). But on its ninth album Stereolab sounds every bit as fresh and enjoyable as it did then. In fact, the group—now a five-piece led, as ever, by chanteuse Laetitia Sadier and multi-instrumentalist Tim Gane—is better than ever, hitching its bubbly melodies to arrangements that draw from a decade's worth of sonic know-how. Some songs here buzz along like the band's early guitar-and-organ-based drone-pop; others are more playful, built atop the gurgling electronics and syncopation of more recent albums. Nobody else melds martini music and seduction sounds as effectively. This CD could be your late-night secret ingredient. (*Elektra*) ¥¥¥½ —*Tim Mohr*

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND TRIO * Slon
Every quarter century or so jazz is declared dead. Then something comes along to revive it. As this experimental trio demonstrates on its third release, jazz is now drawing tremendous inspiration from laptop music. Rob Mazurek's cornet playing matures with every outing, but the real wonder here is how he mixes electronic and acoustic music to such exquisite effect. If you think jazz is boring, plug in to this. (*Thrill Jockey*) ¥¥¥
—*Leopold Froehlich*

AIR * Talkie Walkie
Air's 1998 debut, *Moon Safari*—which melds synth-heavy soft rock and electronic downbeat—made the French duo after-hours sensations, landed them soundtrack duty on *The Virgin Suicides* and inspired a host of imitators. Now the originators offer a new slice of hush-hop. This time they drop the pointless experimentation of *10,000 Hz Legend* and make a strong, and coherent, return to form. A perfect chill pill. (*Astralwerks*) ¥¥¥ —*T.M.*

PHANTOM PLANET * Phantom Planet
This quintet is known for two things: the anthemic song "California" (now *The O.C.*'s theme) and *Rushmore* actor Jason Schwartzman, who until recently was the drummer (no scandal—he left amicably to concentrate on films). But there's always been much more to Planet than harmonies, hand claps and the aforementioned. With this third go-round, the band captures the dark guitar grit that live audiences have known about for years. (*Epic*) ¥¥¥
—*Alison Prato*



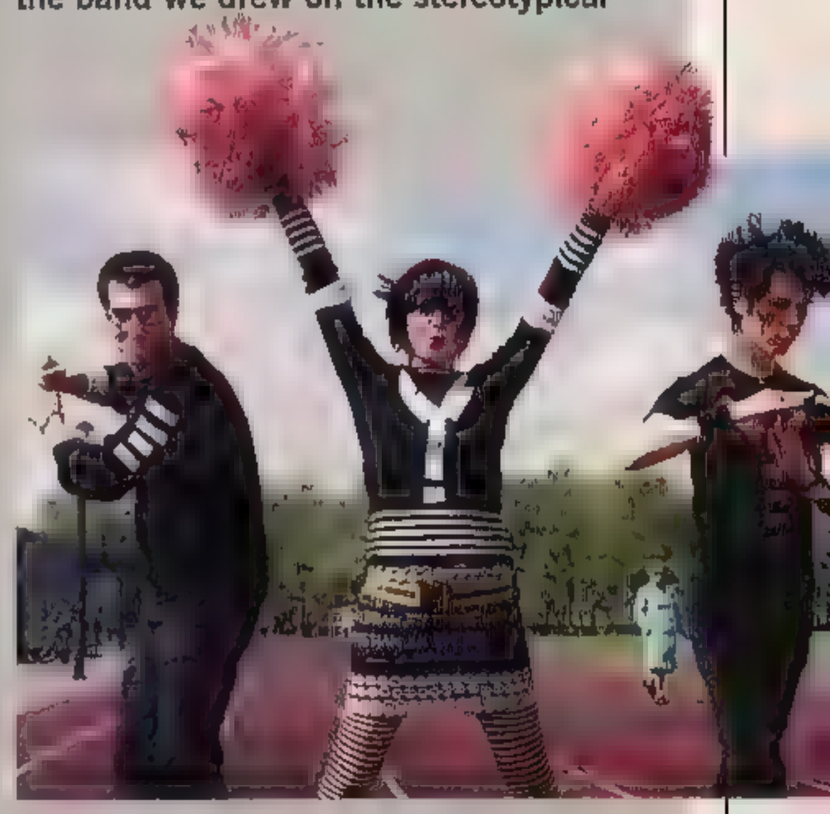
STARSAILOR * Silence Is Easy
For a band that has been slighted as a Coldplay understudy, Starsailor has some nerve. Phil Spector picked it to be his first project in more than 20 years, but after suffering the producer's legendary mood swings the band self-produced its sophomore album and ditched all but two Spector tracks. The result is urgent Brit-rock that draws comparisons to Coldplay and Travis while maintaining its own identity. (*Capitol*) ¥¥½
—*Jason Buhrmester*

phoning it in

[REBEL YEAHS]

Karen O, Nick Zinner and Brian Chase—the Yeah Yeah Yeahs—have been riding such a formidable wave of acclaim that, if they weren't such badasses, it could have wiped them out big kahuna–style. Instead they lived up to the hype by putting out a great record and mowing down fans with their sweaty live shows. They called from the studio where they're recording their next album.

PLAYBOY: Your music is dripping with raw, sexual sounds and themes. Is sex your muse?
KAREN O: The songs "Bang" and "Art Star" are odes to sex. When we started the band we drew on the stereotypical



genres in rock and roll—sex and violence—as an experiment. It was tongue-in-cheek. People lash out more to songs about sex, drugs and rock and roll.
PLAYBOY: Are you the sex vixen you play onstage?
KAREN O: That comes out when I'm around a beat and a sexy riff. Normally I'm low-key. But after a few drinks....
PLAYBOY: What's your poison?
KAREN O: I like alcohol that makes you giddy and silly, not whiskey or beer. It used to be tequila—specifically double-shot margaritas starting right after sound check. Lately it's just a couple bottles of champagne before I go on.
PLAYBOY: How's the groupie situation? In other words, do the YYYs need a steady supply of K-Y?
KAREN O: Nick definitely gets a fair share of groupies, but he gets a different kind of groupie than Brian does. Brian gets girls who want to marry him and have his children. Nick gets girls who just want to get down to business.
PLAYBOY: And you?
KAREN O: I do have a lot of lady fans. They squeal and pull their hair out like I'm Elvis or something. —*Barrett Schultz*

game of the month

[RISE TO HONOR]

Jet Li gets digitized to deliver a Hong Kong beatdown

The dark alleyways and seedy wharves of *Rise to Honor* (*Sony,* PS2) are home turf to a stream of thugs, each hungry for a knuckle sandwich and a side of boot salad. As hero Kit Yun, you're happy to serve them—and you don't need to memorize a bunch of complex button-mashing combos to do so. As action-fighting games go, this one is ridiculously simple: Use the left thumbstick to move; use the right thumbstick to deliver a kick in the chest or a fist in the face. *Dead or Alive* devotees might scream "Hong Kong phooey!" at this level of simplicity, but we liked it—especially when surrounded by a swarm of foes. Created in collaboration with martial arts star Jet Li, *Honor* is modeled after Hong Kong action flicks, and there's the rub: This isn't a game you replay ad infinitum; it's a story you experience. When you finish, you may stick it on the shelf and never touch it again, like a good book. But that doesn't mean it's not a fun read. ¥¥¥½ *—Josh Robertson*

GANGLAND (*Whiptail Interactive,* PC) Think of this strategy game as *The Sims* meets *The Sopranos.* Playing as one of four mobbed-up brothers, you set up extortion rackets, run prostitution rings and even snuff out rival gangs. You need more than a mean streak to survive: Power means ducking G-men and recruiting muscle to protect your *famiglia.* Running a criminal empire requires making decisions—any one of which could have you sleeping with the fishes. ¥¥¥ *—Marc Saltzman*

THE SUFFERING (*Midway,* PS2, Xbox, GameCube) First the good news: An earthquake has sprung you from death row. The bad news: It also opened a portal to hell, filling the prison with demons that make the electric chair look like fun. The lethal-injection-wielding beastie and other gruesome monsters were designed by movie F/X guru Stan Winston. Luckily, you can transform into a hulking beast when the prison yard gets too crowded. Dead man morphing! ¥¥¥ *—John Gaudiosi*

ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS (*Capcom,* PS2) The sword-swinging *Onimusha* action series has all the elements for a great fighting-game spin-off. So why doesn't this one cut it? As musclebound warriors or demonic fiends, four players maul one another with blades and bombs, but even the special soul-sucking ability didn't keep us from feeling drained by the repetitious play. Considering the series this game is based on, we expected something with more edge. ¥¥ *—Scott Steinberg*

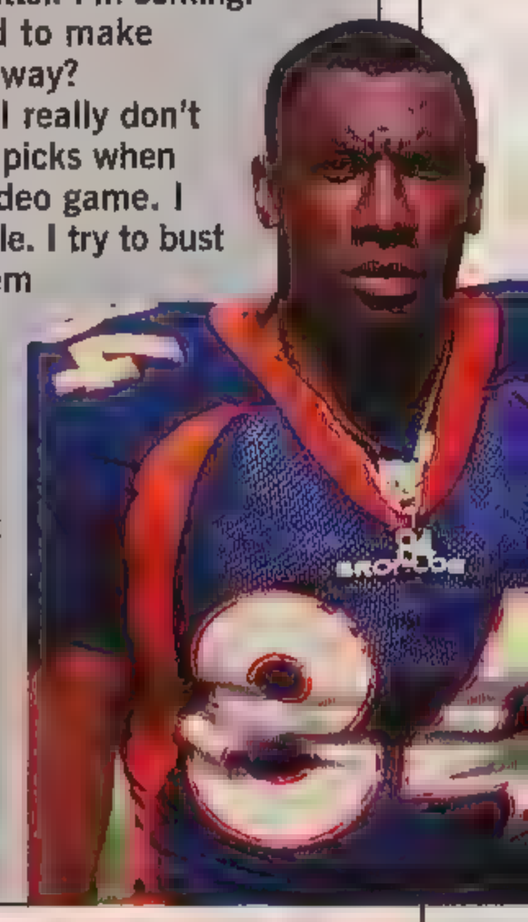
ALIAS (*Acclaim,* PS2, Xbox, PC) We're suckers for that point in nearly every episode of the ABC spy drama *Alias* when star Jennifer Garner squeezes into a rubbery outfit that's somehow essential for completing her CIA mission. So although this game adaptation's take-down-the-arch-criminal plot is trite, the heroine looks so much like Garner—skintight guises and all—that we're ready to back her on recon missions and vicious firefights from Saudi Arabia to Hong Kong. ¥¥½ *—S.S.*

pixel profile

[WORD ON THE STREET]

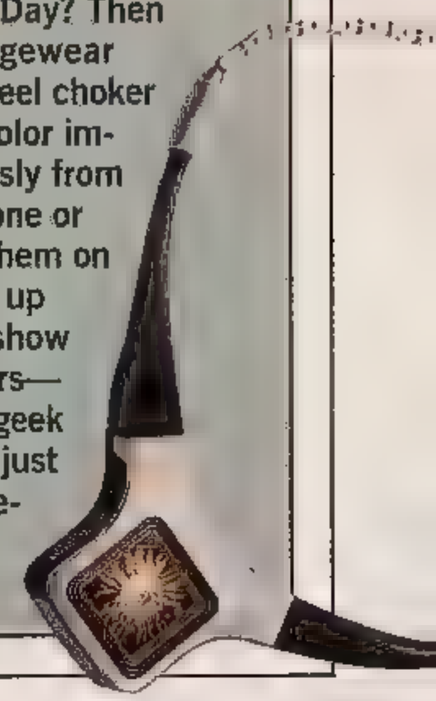
Denver Broncos tight end and *NFL Street* cover star Shannon Sharpe discusses strategy and hurting Raiders

PLAYBOY: What's the story with *NFL Street* (*EA,* PS2, Xbox, GameCube)?
SHARPE: It's like the game you played when you were growing up. You'd play seven on seven instead of 11 on 11. And you never played on a football field, so the light post was a first down and the edge of the basketball court was a touchdown.
PLAYBOY: Is the *NFL Street* version of Shannon as good as the real Shannon?
SHARPE: No. I'm always disappointed with how they rate me. They give me great hands and terrible speed. And I fumble a lot in this game, which is not a good combination. Plus, I'm slow.
PLAYBOY: What's your strategy on defense? Coverage or blitz?
SHARPE: I always blitz. No matter what it might be—first and 10, fourth and two—it doesn't matter. I'm coming.
PLAYBOY: Is it hard to make interceptions that way?
SHARPE: Honestly, I really don't care about getting picks when I'm playing the video game. I just try to kill people. I try to bust them up. I let them catch the ball so I can throw 'em into the wall. It would be nice if I could injure a player. I'd definitely try to get their best players. That way, when I play the Raiders I could take out Charlie Garner and Rich Gannon. That would be real nice. *—J.R.*



wired

Nokia Imagewear Medallion (about $300) Is your gal hinting that she wants jewelry this Valentine's Day? Then give her the Nokia Imagewear Medallion necklace, a steel choker that stores up to eight color images transferred wirelessly from a compatible mobile phone or computer and displays them on a backlit screen. Load it up with pictures of you to show the world that she's yours—tell her it's the latest in geek chic. Then swear it was just a gag and give her something she won't break over your thick skull.

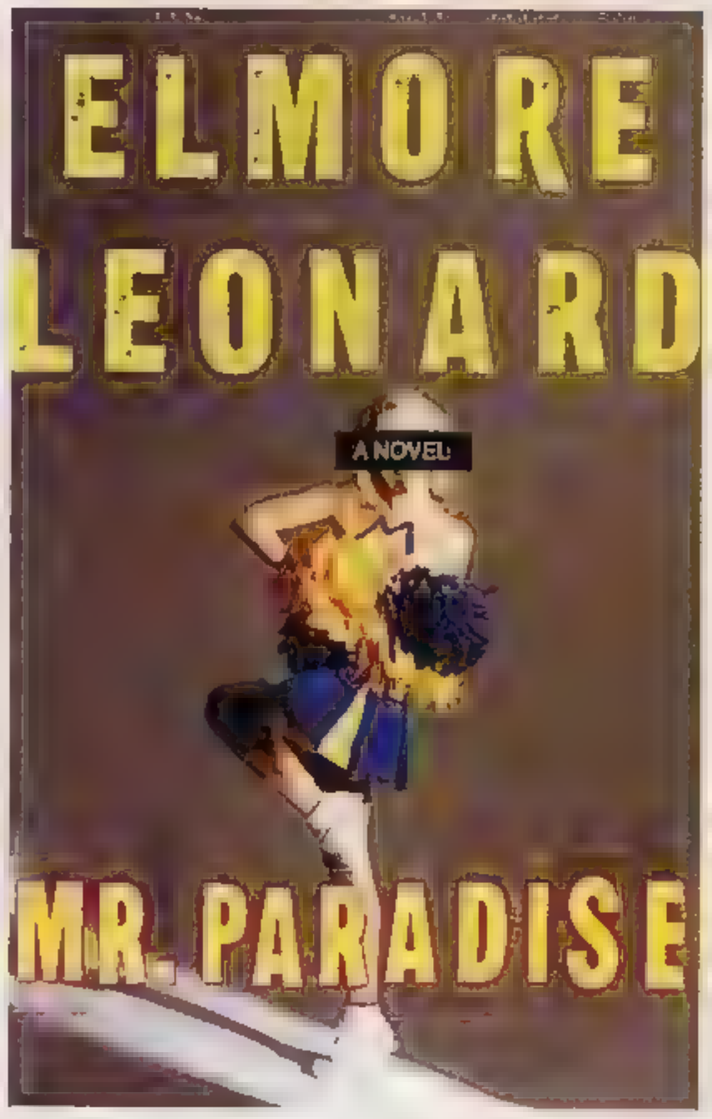


WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 148

book of the month

[MR. PARADISE * ELMORE LEONARD]

The crime-fiction master goes in for a Motown tune-up



Leonard's early crime novels are masterpieces of decline and decay. Set in Detroit, books such as *Unknown Man No. 89* and *52 Pickup* marked the psychopathology of Motor City life. When Leonard set his subsequent novels in Florida and California, they lost some of their brutality. Now, for the first time in 12 books, America's best crime writer returns to Detroit for another powerful homicide tale. Tony Paradiso is an 84-year-old lawyer who has a perverse passion for University of Michigan cheerleaders. This being Detroit, Mr. Paradise dies for his sins. His murder is investigated by a widowed detective who pursues a couple of dumb hit men while falling in love with a Victoria's Secret model. *Mr. Paradise* is filled with the sort of desperate and weary characters that made Leonard's earlier crime novels so plausible. And, as usual, no one alive writes better dialogue. A great homecoming for Leonard. (*William Morrow*) ¥¥¥½ —*Leopold Froehlich*

READ 'EM AND WEEP * John Stravinsky
The 50 million Americans who play poker may be surprised to learn that Kenny Rogers's "You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em" isn't the only maxim about the game worth remembering. Stravinsky, who writes widely on gambling, assembles a full house of short stories, novel excerpts, poems and nonfiction by the likes of Mark Twain, John Updike and David Mamet. We especially dig Martin Amis's breezy essay, which begins, "A man can find out a lot about himself playing poker. Is he brave? Is he cool? Does he have any money left?" This isn't a royal flush, but some spots are amusing enough to crack up your poker face. (*Harper Collins*) ¥¥½ —*Alison Prato*

ALMOST MIDNIGHT * Michael W. Cuneo
In 1990 Darrell Mease murdered three people. Considering that the deed was done in conservative rural Missouri, anyone would expect this true tale to end with Mease's execution—except Mease. After a death row religious revelation, he predicted that a miracle would spare his sorry life. That miracle arrived in no less a form than the pope, who during a visit to St. Louis successfully lobbied Governor Mel Carnahan to commute Mease's sentence. Cuneo handles these sinners and saints with equal aplomb and also manages to shed light on the drug culture buried deep in the Ozarks. By the way, does anybody have the Vatican's toll-free number? (*Broadway*) ¥¥¥ —*Jason Buhrmester*

PROJECT X * Jim Shepard
The Columbine school shooting was an event so unsettling that socially conscious artists have lined up to find meaning in its senselessness. Shepard's sixth novel examines two teens with striking resemblances to Columbine killers Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. The eighth-grade narrator, Hanratty, suffers from extreme angst, caused in part by his inability to open his locker. His only friend, the aptly named Flake, purposely cuts his middle fingers so he can flip off teachers while showing his injuries. Victims of relentless bullying, they concoct a plan to gun down their tormentors. Don't expect to hate these characters. Shepard seems to be saying that perpetrators of school shootings aren't filled with hatred but rather with unrequited love. (*Knopf*) ¥¥¥ —*Patty Lambert*

library of lust

THE LEATHER BOOK
Anne-Laure Quilleriet
Rock stars can't live without it. Bikers fight to the death over it. Even soccer moms are enamored with leather. This 400-page coffee-table book shows how animal hide became a fashion statement for everyone from prehistoric cave dwellers to dungeon-loving fetishists and captures the multipurpose pelt in every setting—though we still like leather best when it's stretched across a shapely ass. If you flip through this at a PETA meeting, expect to get spray-painted. (*Assouline*) ¥¥¥ —*P.L.*

THE QUOTABLE SNOOP

"Grab it, have it, stick it to the plug/It's Snoop, Doggy, I got a fat dub/Sack of the chronic in my back pocket loc/Need myself a lighter so I can't take a smoke."
—"Tha Shiznit," 1993

"Your body will begin to deteriorate if you don't take care of it. Superman couldn't even do what I was doing."
—on cleaning up his act, *Entertainment Weekly*, 2002

"Anybody older than me knows they were saying 'bitch' before I was born. I didn't make up that shit. If I did, I mean, damn, give me some money! That's creative shit."
—PLAYBOY, 1995

"You got to be who you are, when you are. It's just me getting older."
—*The Wall Street Journal*, 2002

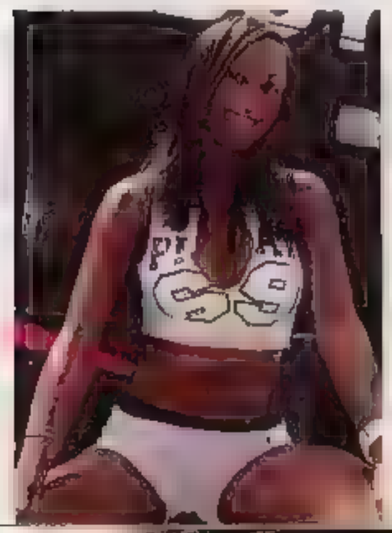
"A lot of times people don't see the positivity in gangsta rap. We all come from violent backgrounds, but we find time to do the right thing for Mother's Day."
—*Interview*, 1996

"Rap is me broadcasting and forecasting my life. You can look at it from the perspective of where I'm from, where I'm at and what I'm trying to do."
—*Vibe*, 2000

"If I'd been a straight-A student and rapped about Jesus, I wouldn't get no media. Motherfuckers wouldn't give a fuck. Since I'm telling the truth, I'm a threat."
—PLAYBOY, 1995

SNOOP GONE BUCK WILD!

When Snoop Dogg, his debaucherous posse and Playboy TV host Ken Francis boarded a luxury bus during the Roc the Mic tour, we knew there would be only one word to describe the experience: *smokin'*. Luckily we caught every scintillating moment of the trip on tape. The result, Playboy TV's *Buckwild*, features Snoop and pals (Busta Rhymes, Sean Paul and Spliff Star) getting candid about—what else?—sex. The series premieres January 9 (look for an extended DVD later this year). Until then, here's a glimpse of our favorite on-the-road moments.



Declaration of Ho-Dependence

Cruising down the road, the ever-eloquent Snoop declares, "You white hos did your thing with *Girls Gone Wild*. Now it's time for ladies of flavor to step up. Hugh, I need to holler at your ass. Let me have a party and fill the Mansion with black Bunnies. I got plenty of bud and drink."

Shake That Ass/Show Us What You're Working With

Where did they find the *Buckwild* girls? "Before we hit the road we got more than 300 e-mail submissions," Francis says. "We had to narrow them down to 10. Because it's an urban show, the girls have to have ass. When hip-hop is playing, they've got to be able to get down and dance. They have to get crazy at the drop of a dime."

This Bud's for You

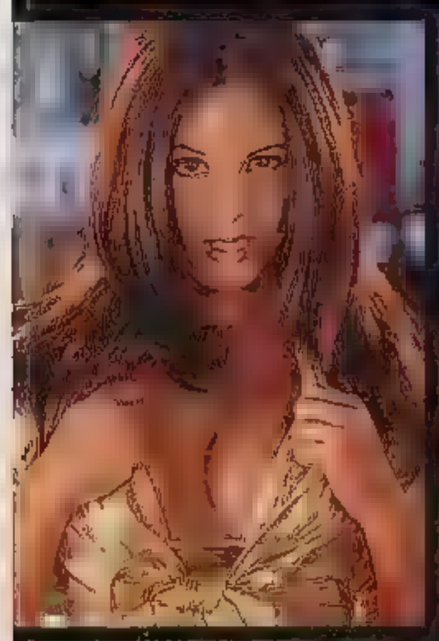
How many times did cops pull over the bus? Three. "They wanted to see Snoop Dogg and the girls," Francis says. "Had Snoop been on our ride, I think they would have searched for bud. Our bus was following his, but since ours had the girls and all the attention, it was cool for Snoop. He could go by undetected."

Top: Snoop on BET. Left: the Playboy TV ride, which caused several cases of whiplash.

playboy.com

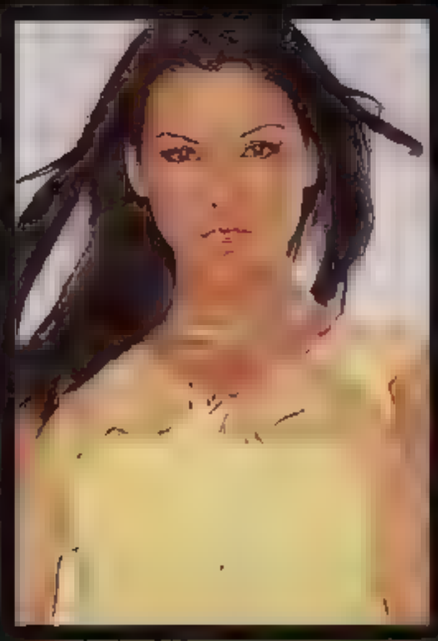
CYBER GIRL OF THE YEAR: CLICK US A WINNER!

We know, we know: Your girlfriend is pissed that you spend more time in the Playboy Cyber Club than you spend talking to her. But before you buckle and stop logging on, here's an idea: Tell her you're exercising your patriotic right to vote. She doesn't have to know that you're voting for the Cyber Girl of the Year. Read about the 12 finalists below, then go to playboy.com/cgoy and pick your favorite. Will it be the Army intelligence analyst? The *Road Rules* alum? The motorcycle enthusiast? The high school teacher? The reggae guitarist? Relationship saved (and we'll announce the winner this spring).



MARY BETH DECKER

After a stint on MTV's *Road Rules*, Mary Beth plans to move to New York City to pursue acting. "I'd also love to write for *Rolling Stone*," she says. "Music is a passion."



CARMELLA DECESARE

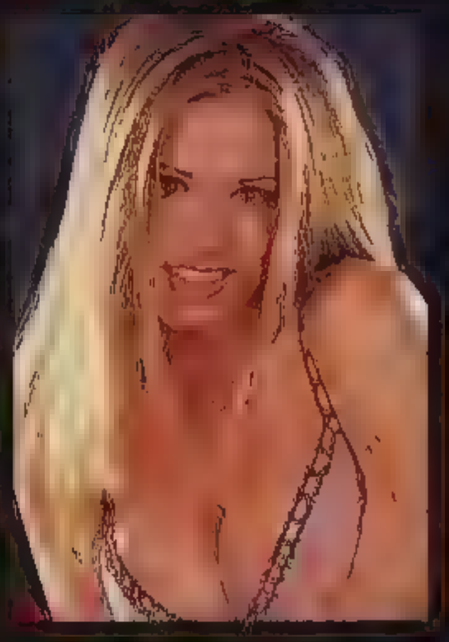
Some stellar dating advice from the brunette beauty: "Play hard to get. Let the girl know you're interested, but don't chase her around. We like a challenge."

HEATHER McQUAID

She has an affection for manual labor, and elbow grease gets her thinking dirty: "I like a guy who's good with his hands and who doesn't mind getting messy."

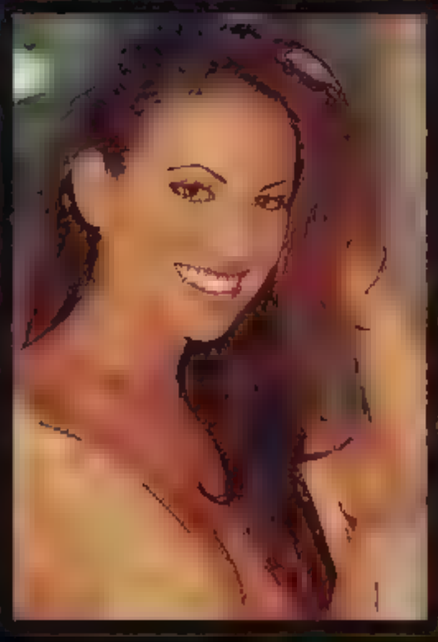
WENDY CULP

Attention, bikers: A former Army intelligence analyst, this high-energy blonde is dying to get high on the hog. "Harleys are so incredibly sexy," Wendy says. "Plus, I hear they vibrate!"



SHAMRON MOORE

Half Sicilian, half Polish, Shamron is 100 percent hot. So who raises her barometer? "Kevin Spacey in *American Beauty* and Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct*."

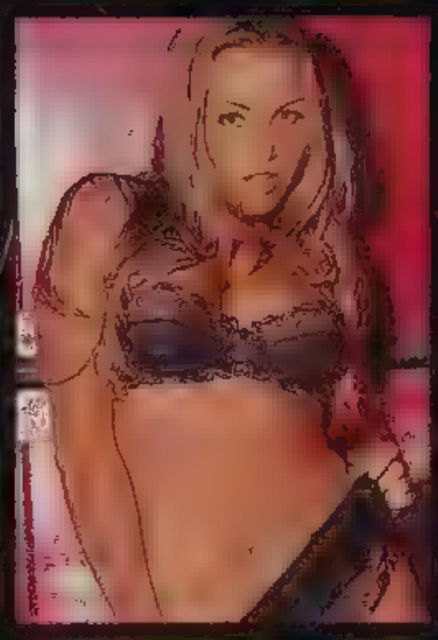


ALICIA BURLEY

"'Brown Eyed Girl' could have been written about me," Alicia says. Her CD collection is all about the Morrisons—Van and Jim: "I wish I'd met Jim. His songs are so powerful."

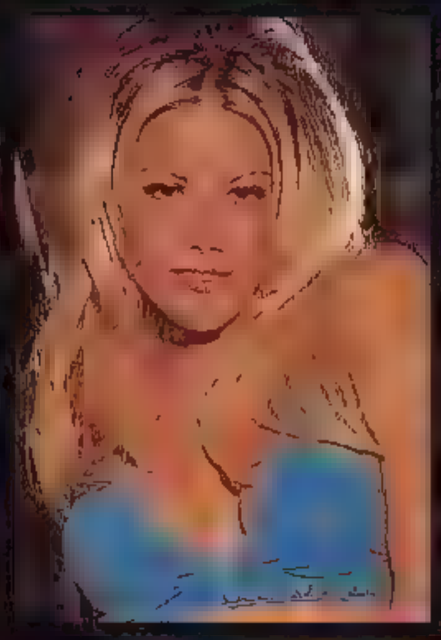
NANCIE TYLER LE

Van Halen would be proud: Nancie gets us hot for teacher. "I have a degree in English lit, and I'm getting my master's," she says. "I'd like to teach high school."



TIFFANY LANG

Tiffany's favorite TV vixen? *Sex and the City*'s Samantha. "Kim Cattrall is confident and comfortable with her sexuality," she says. "She's motivation for all of us to get busy in the bedroom!"



JESSICA RENEE

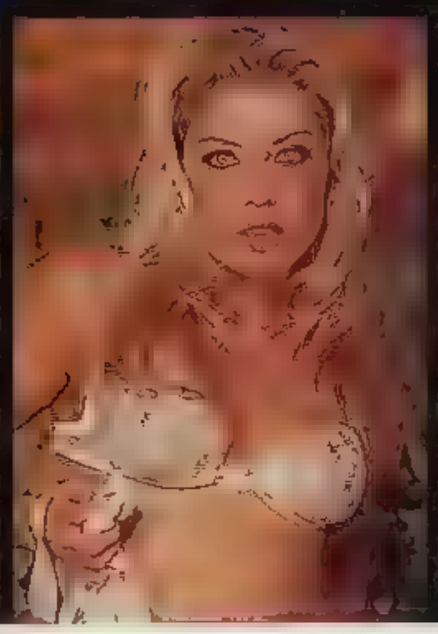
Jessica is beyond bootylicious: "Guys always say I have a nice ass," she says. "Considering how petite I am, I was lucky to be blessed with a nice little set of curves."

JACKIE BEAN

On the set, Jackie, who wants to perform in a rasta band, played guitar. Her next vacation destination? "Jamaica," she says. "I'll drink Red Stripes and dance to reggae all day."

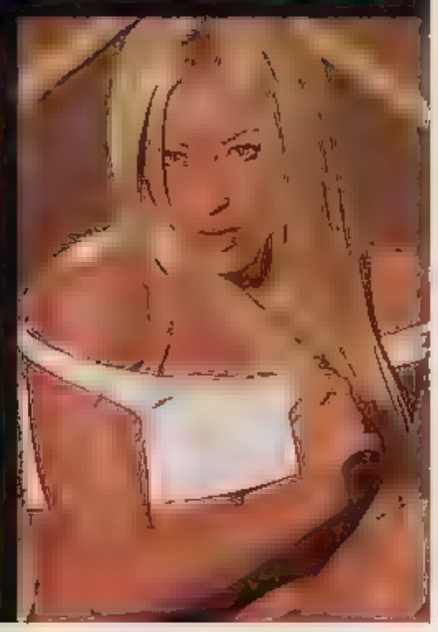
KRISTIN NOVAK

Kristin is all about the ride: "My parents were roller coaster enthusiasts," she says. "Vacations meant searching for the world's best coasters. I've ridden almost every one in the U.S."



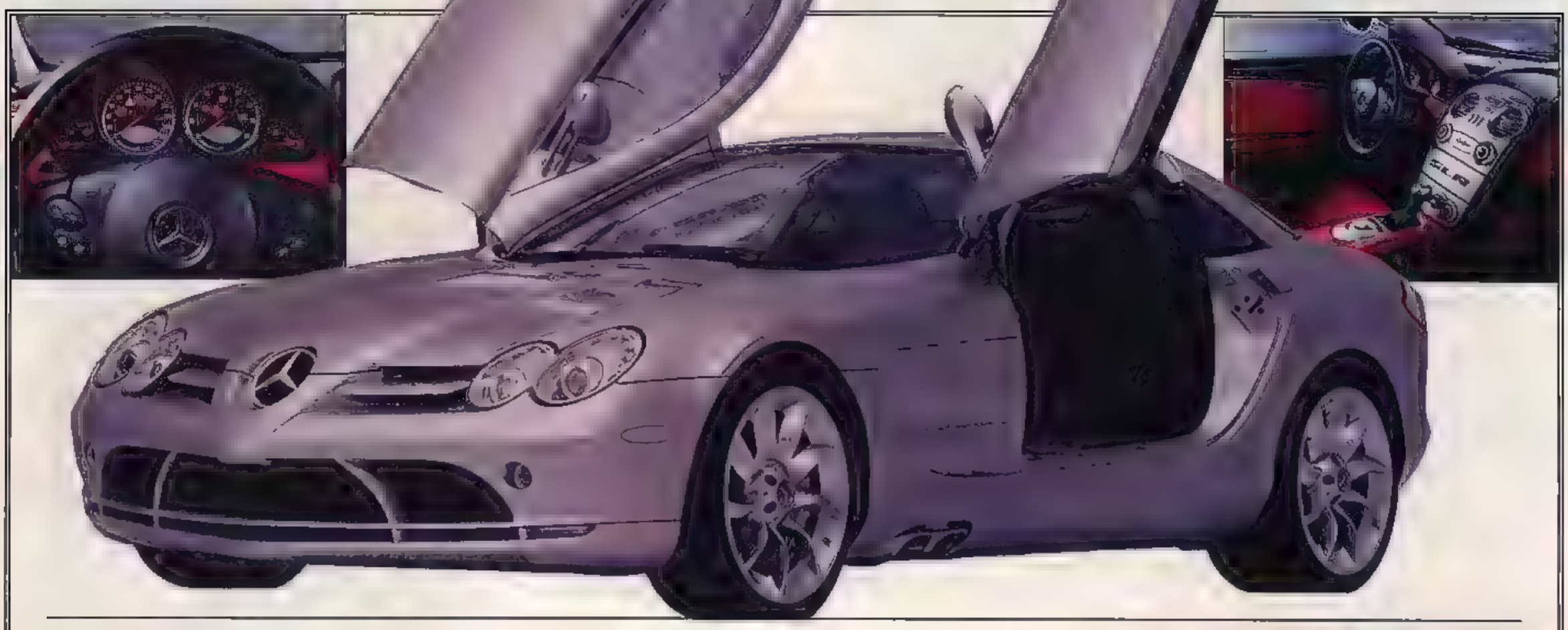
LIZA HARTLING

"I want to be a rock star," Liza says. Good thing she's pals with Andrew W.K., who snapped her for Playboy.com. "He's an ass man," she says. And who can blame him?



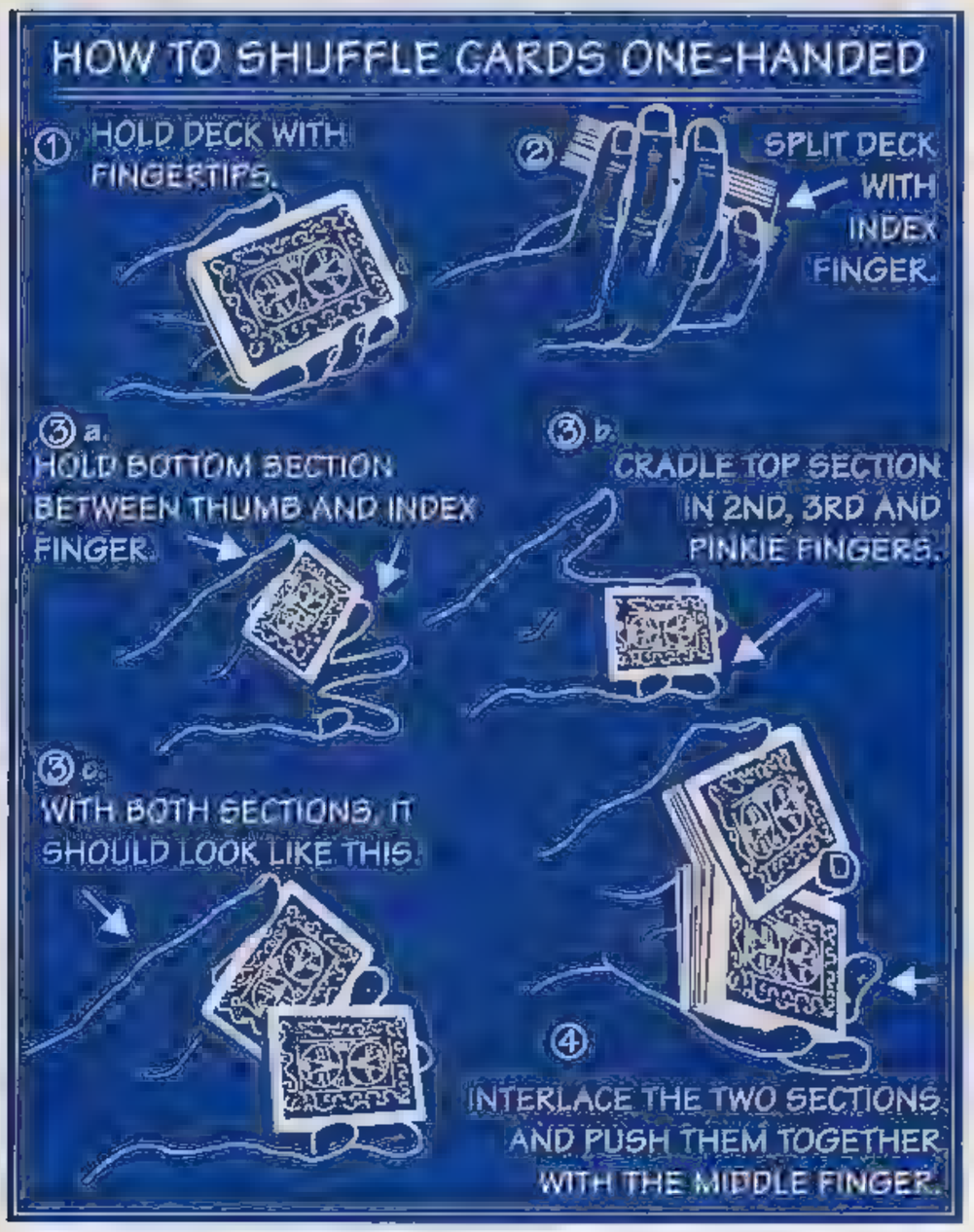
MANTRACK

hey it's personal



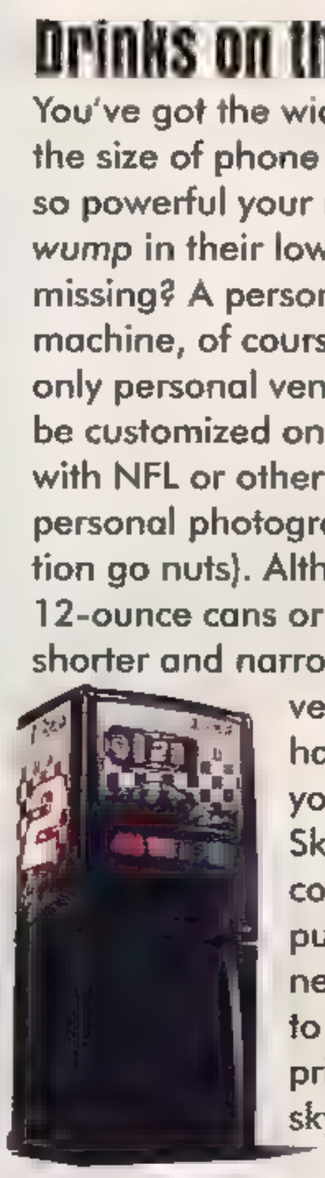
Auto Erotica

Could this be the finest, sexiest Mercedes-Benz ever built? Coming to select dealers this summer: the McLaren SLR, a lightweight, carbon-fiber-bodied wundercar, the love child of MB and the British racing company McLaren (it builds Mercedes's Formula One race cars). The scissor-doored SLR packs 600-plus ponies under that star-embossed hood. You'll see 60 mph in 3.7 seconds. Top speed? A blinding 215 mph. All this from a supercharged V8 mounted strategically for optimal weight distribution and mated to a five-speed Mercedes-AMG Speed-Shift transmission that selects gears in nanoseconds. Ceramic disc brakes and a pop-up spoilerlike air brake help bring you back from hyperspeed. Leather abounds inside, and unlike most supercars the SLR idles sweetly in traffic. Price: $400,000. Perchance to dream.



Drinks on the House

You've got the widescreen TV, speakers the size of phone booths and a subwoofer so powerful your neighbors can feel the *wump* in their lower intestines. What's missing? A personal beverage vending machine, of course. Maytag's SkyBox, the only personal vendor on the market, can be customized on its front or side panels with NFL or other sports logos or even personal photographs (let your imagination go nuts). Although it can hold 66 12-ounce cans or 33 12-ounce bottles, it's shorter and narrower than a traditional vending machine. Plus, it has a lower shelf on which you can stash noshes. The SkyBox doesn't accept coins or bills, but you can put an empty beer can next to it and ask your pals to chip in toward its $569 price tag. Order yours at skyboxbymaytag.com.



MANTRACK

Paradise Found

Let's cut to the chase. After you check in at Hidden Beach—Mexico's first all-inclusive luxury nudist resort, located an hour south of Cancún—you're expected to get and stay naked. That makes packing easy. This isn't some half-assed, clothing-optional getaway. Nude sunbathing, dining, dancing, you name it are the order of the day—and night. The resort has 42 oceanfront suites (each stocked with a minibar and a spirits dispenser that squirts free rum, tequila, whiskey and vodka) that offer privacy should you choose to keep to yourself. Nudity and free booze—who could ask for anything more? Prices range from about $150 to $200 per person per night. For package details and other information, head over to hiddenbeachresort.com.

Clothesline: Jeff Garlin

One of the stars of HBO's hit show *Curb Your Enthusiasm* says he's too big to buy clothes off the rack. "I have suits and tuxes made for me. I love the Gap, but unfortunately the T-shirts I buy shrink to where they become belly shirts. I'm also a suspenders guy. I have about 30 pairs, and I get more all the time because my character on *Curb Your Enthusiasm* wears them. That's how I got hooked. They're all tasteful. Nothing flashy. My prized clothing items are an Ernie Banks Cubs jersey—he's my all-time favorite baseball player—and several of Jackie Gleason's suits that I got from Mrs. Gleason. I grew up with his stepson Craig, and she gave me the suits when I went to visit them after Jackie died. I was reluctant to take them, but Mrs. Gleason said, 'From one comedian to another.' They're a pretty close fit. I'm waiting for just the right occasion to wear one."

Great Head

Golf is a game of technology and one-upmanship. Add Nike's line of CPR iron-wood hybrids ($149 each) to your bag and you've got both working for you. Aside from looking sharp, these new clubheads are designed to replace your long irons, the hardest clubs to swing accurately. The toe of the clubface is closed, so even terminal slicers ("Fore!") will have a better chance of squaring the face at impact, creating a straighter shot. The clubs below have an 18- and a 22-degree loft. The 18 replaces your two and three irons, the 22 your three and four. A 24-degree club replaces your four and five. More info at nikegolf.com. Playing through!

The Perfect Time...

To prevent food cravings: When you wake up in the morning. Yeah, you've heard it before: Eat breakfast. But it makes sense, and not for the reasons you think. After seven hours of sleep (during which you probably didn't eat), your liver is about 75 percent depleted of glycogen (stored carbs). If you don't eat, your body begins to cannibalize muscle. You eat yourself. A meal in the morning (ideally a mix of high-fiber carbs and some protein) will reconfigure your metabolism so your body doesn't send out "desperation" signals later. • *To plan your workday:* At the end of the previous day. If you work from an end-of-day list, you won't waste time trying to recall where you left off. When you head home, tomorrow will already be organized, so you'll be able to kick back and pour a tall one.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 148

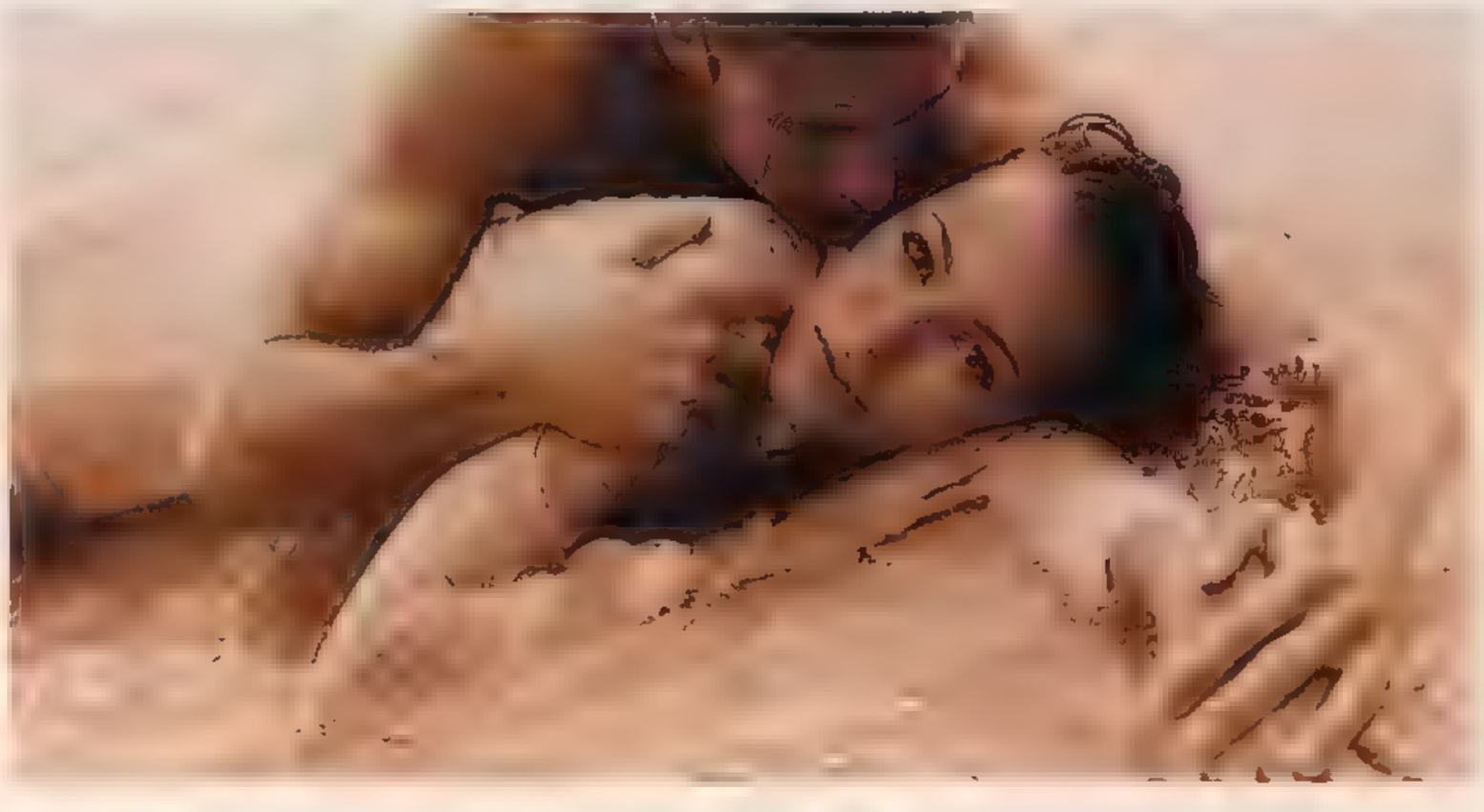
Advertisement

Jamie Ireland is a freelance writer in the areas of sex, fitness, romance, and travel.

Hot Spot

the inside story on Great Sex!

by Jamie Ireland



Learning "The Ropes"...

This month I got a letter from a reader in Texas about a "little secret" that has made her sex life with her husband absolutely explosive. (Those Texans know their stuff, let me tell you.)

Tina writes:

Dear Jamie,

Last month my husband returned from a business trip in Europe, and he was hotter and hornier than ever before, with more passion than he has had for years. It was incredible. He flat wore me out! And the best part of all—he was having multiple orgasms. I know what you're thinking... men don't have multiples, but trust me he was, and his newfound pow! pow! power! stimulated me into the most intense orgasms I've ever had. So, before we knew it, we were both basking in the glow of the best sex of our lives!

We tried tantric stuff in the past, and the results were so-so. But this was something new and exciting, completely out of the ordinary. I asked my husband what had created such a dramatic change in our lovemaking and he told me he'd finally learned "the ropes."

On the last night of his business trip my husband spent an evening dining out with a Swedish nutritionist and his wife of 20 years. The couple was obviously still quite enamored with each other, so my husband asked their secret. The nutritionist told him their sex life was more passionate than ever. Then he pulled a small bottle from his satchel and gave it to my husband. The bottle contained a natural supplement that the nutritionist told my husband would teach him "the ropes" of good sex.

My husband takes the supplement every day. The supply from the nutritionist is about to run out and we desperately want to know how we can find more. Do you know anything about "the ropes," and can you tell us how we can find it in the States?

Sincerely,

Tina C., Ft. Worth, Texas

Tina, you and the rest of our readers are in luck, because it just so happens I do know about "the ropes" and the supplement your husband's Swedish friend likely shared.

The physical contractions and fluid release during male orgasm can be multiplied and intensified by a product called Ogöplex Pure Extract™. It's a daily supplement specially formulated to trigger better orgasmic experiences in men. The best part, from a woman's perspective, is that the motion and experience a man can achieve with Ogöplex Pure Extract can help stimulate our own orgasms, bringing a whole new meaning to the term simultaneous climax!

The term used by the Swedish nutritionist is actually fairly common slang for the effect your husband experienced. The enhanced contractions and heightened orgasmic release are often referred to as ropes because of the rope-like effect of release during climax. In other words, as some people have said, "it just keeps coming and coming and coming."

As far as finding it in the States, I know of just one importer—Böland Naturals. If you are interested, you can contact them at 1-866-ogoplex or ogoplex.com. Ogöplex is all-natural and safe to take. All the people I've spoken with have said taking the once-daily tablet has led to the roping effect Tina described in her letter.

Aren't you glad you asked?

Jamie Ireland

Individual results may vary

The Playboy Advisor

An attractive woman lives down the hall from me in my apartment building. We've exchanged small talk, but that's it. I often fantasize about her while masturbating. A few weeks ago the couple who live next door to me invited the woman to a barbecue. They asked her to bring me along. Puzzled, she asked why. The couple said they could hear us on some nights and assumed we were dating. When she told them we weren't, it dawned on all of them that what they had been hearing was my moaning this woman's name. A few days ago my neighbor—nice guy that he is—told me everything. I was speechless. He said the woman had seemed amused. I had wanted to ask her out, but now that seems comical. What should I do?—J.W., San Diego, California

The next time you beat off, put the other sock in your mouth. The only way to find out if the object of your affection was horrified, mildly amused or totally turned on is to ask her out for coffee. You'll have your answer in a nanosecond. For the record, the women in our office—an open-minded group, to be sure—universally agreed that this revelation would creep them out. If you can score in this situation, no woman will ever again seem like a challenge. You may have the balls to fess up, but a better strategy might be misdirection. That is, say hello, apologize for not introducing yourself earlier, ask her name as if you didn't know it, then lie: "That's funny. My ex has the same name." She may not believe you, but it could plant a reasonable doubt, and that's all you need for acquittal.

How long can gelatin shots sit around in the fridge and still be good to eat?—M.G., San Francisco, California

If you've covered them in cling wrap, they should last for up to a week. This according to Chaz Boston Baden, the foremost authority on gelatin shots. Since 1994 he has maintained a site at boston-baden.com/hazel/Jello that offers his philosophy (shots should be served as alcoholic desserts, not as a quick way to get drunk), advice (use sugar-free gelatin for easier cleanup) and recipes, such as his world-famous margarita shot: Stir 4 cups of lime-flavored gelatin into 2 cups of boiling water until dissolved. Add 1¼ cups cold water, ½ cup tequila and ¼ cup triple sec. Chill until set. Makes 8 half-cup or 16 quarter-cup servings. For a strawberry margarita use strawberry gelatin and ¼ cup lime juice or lime schnapps. Use gin instead of tequila for a kamikaze or rum instead of tequila for a daiquiri.

What does it mean when a woman can have the biggest orgasm of her life simply by standing next to a certain man? This has happened to me three times—the first was 10 years ago, and the most recent was last year. My girlfriend and I waited for

the guy to see if it would happen again, and it did—twice. The man is Willie Nelson. Is this normal? I don't want to wreck his marriage or mine. But I would be a cheap date.—M.J., Newark, New Jersey

God works in mysterious ways.

The reader who wrote because his wife never wants sex can take comfort in the fact that other aspects of his marriage are fine. My husband's excuse is either "I'm tired" or "My back hurts." I've gone from being hurt to angry to indifferent. Now I take what I can get, and I rely on my vibrator. It's sad, but many of us need more than our spouses are willing to give.—J.D., New York, New York

Indifference is a sign of real trouble. An angry spouse is at least motivated to take action. In his book Great Sex, Michael Castleman observes that, over time, sex in any relationship becomes less like the Fourth of July and more like Thanksgiving. He summarizes the attitude of the spouse who wants more sex as "You used to want sex five times a week. If I'd known you'd eventually want it only twice a month, I'm not sure I would have stuck around. But now we're married and have kids and a mortgage. I love you, and to me love means sex. I feel that you don't love me. I also feel that you tricked me. Now I feel stuck." The other partner thinks, "If I'd known you were such a sex fiend, I'm not sure I would have stuck around. I love you, but there are big differences between love and sex. You're insatiable. I feel stuck." Couples in this situation slip into one of two modes: bickering or silence. The higher-desire person will often stop initiating sex to see how long it takes for the partner to ask for it—the long wait often makes him or her even angrier. The couple stops hugging, kissing, holding hands or cuddling because the partner who wants sex sees these activities as foreplay. Castleman notes that couples have three choices: Break up, live in misery, or compromise. Therapists find that both partners typically desire the same thing: more nonsexual affection and more attention from their spouse in general. That's the starting point. Good sex comes out of a good marriage, not the other way around.

If my girlfriend swallows during oral sex, within half an hour she will have a bout of diarrhea. What causes this?—J.A., Acworth, Georgia

Your girlfriend may be hypersensitive to sorbitol, one of the many elements found in semen, although typically an adult must consume at least 10 grams before having symptoms. (Sorbitol is widely used as a sugar substitute, most commonly in diet candy.) We can only suggest that she spit instead of swallow. Over-the-counter remedies are available, but watching your lover slug Pepto-Bismol after blowing you may lead to psychological problems.

What is the etiquette for answering a phone that has caller ID, specifically at work? Should you greet the person by name or use a more generic hello?—D.Y., Phoenix, Arizona

Answer with your name instead of theirs. Someday that caller ID is going to be useful, so keep it close to your vest.

I have a thing for the peach fuzz on the back of a woman's thigh. When I make love to my wife doggy style and the light hits her leg just right, I'm ecstatic. The best example ever was in your July 2003 issue, page 93, which is a wonderful shot of the fuzz on Playmate Marketa Janska. Did you plan it that way?—J.S., Newport Beach, California

Of course.

This past October you mentioned clubs that have male and female dancers. On weekends PT's Showclub in Denver has male strippers on one stage and women on the others. The dance floor is skirted by an amateur stage, where any woman can jump up, pop her top and earn a few bucks.—W.J., Denver, Colorado

How much can a guy make? We just put an addition on our house.

I've been told that when one chooses an outfit, the shirt-pants-shoes color combination should alternate—that is, light-dark-light or dark-light-dark. What do you think?—S.C., San Antonio, Texas

That's not the place to start. The goal of dressing well is to draw attention to your face. The first thing to consider is the contrast between your skin and your shirt, and your jacket

ILLUSTRATION BY ISTVAN BANYAI

and tie if you wear them. Selecting colors is trickier, but if you stand in front of the mirror and hold up enough colors to your face, some will stand out (you don't want to look pasty or pink). Eye color and suntan are also factors. "If you have blue eyes, you definitely want to wear blue shirts or ties with some strong blue in them," says Alan Flusser, author of Dressing the Man. "A dark tan tends to mean you should wear more contrast. That's why men tend to dress more colorfully in the spring and summer." If you play with contrast, be careful. Too much and you'll look like a Creamsicle. Still confused? Stick with the classics: black jacket with gray pants, blue jacket with khakis.

Last year a woman asked how she could get her anus back to its "natural" pink. As you said, bleaching is crazy. Instead, leave some petroleum jelly down there. After three days your anus will look and feel much lighter and cleaner.—L.L., San Jose, California

And you'll be prepared should any spontaneous butt fucking break out.

A reader wrote in September, asking for new ways to masturbate. Try toothpaste lather for the same cool, tingly sensation you feel when brushing your teeth.—A.C., Grinnell, Iowa

By what process did you discover this?

I prefer bananabation. I wrap masking tape around a banana three quarters of the way up. Then I roll it between my palms to soften it. I cut the end off below the tape, squeeze the insides out and eat them. When it's all empty I have the next best thing to pussy. I lube my erection and then microwave the banana sheath for 23 seconds. I find it adds some excitement between dates. Have you ever heard of this? Is it dangerous?—P.P., Chicago, Illinois

It's dangerous in the monkey house.

Once you have an erection while masturbating, spread the head to open the urethra. Push down on the hole with the index finger of your other hand. Repeat 170 times, then keep your finger over the hole as you slowly stroke your penis. As you reach climax the shaft will fill up with sperm, and the air inside will cause a pressure buildup. The stream of semen that erupts is incredible.—J.A., Los Angeles, California

Because we care about your well-being, we'll warn you of the remote chance that your technique could lead to an embolism. Then we'll get out of the way.

I've heard that the hot weather in Europe last summer is going to yield some fantastic wines. True?—S.B., Madison, Wisconsin

It's too early too tell, though professional tasters will soon be sampling from the barrels (the wines won't be available until 2005). Hot summers and early harvests generally yield high-sugar grapes, which make for better wines. Plenty can go wrong during the harvest or vinification, though, so it's never a sure thing. Winemakers in France are hoping the 2003 vintage will be similar to the great 1947 one—especially since their exports to the U.S. fell 26 percent last year. Wait to hear from trusted tasters such as Robert Parker or Stephen Tanzer for the best wines in your price range. Once you do, it's always less expensive to buy futures.

The author of *Five Minutes to Orgasm* wrote in September that "missionary is probably the worst position for bringing a woman to orgasm." I can come only in missionary. Is there something wrong with me?—G.F., Williamstown, New Jersey

Nothing at all. There's one thing that can bring you to orgasm in any position: your partner's finger (or your own). It may seem like cheating to finger your clit during intercourse, but the penis is a team player.

I recently divorced and am ready to start dating. At what point do I tell a woman that I'm wearing a hairpiece?—M.B., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

She'll know. We all know.

You wrote last fall about people who get headaches during sex. Sex can also ease the pain. When I wake up with a headache, I ask my husband to make love to me. The pain is gone within minutes.—J.B., Springfield, Illinois

You just gave "I have a headache, dear" a wonderful new meaning. In a study conducted at Southern Illinois University, 24 of 53 women who'd had sex while suffering a migraine found that it relieved the pain; only one said her headache got worse. Other research seems to indicate that vaginal stimulation increases a woman's pain threshold. One scientist hypothesized that when the vagina is stimulated the body responds as it does during childbirth—by releasing painkillers.

My boyfriend loves hand jobs, but I've only been able to get him off twice. He's left-handed, and I'm not. Could he have conditioned himself to using his left hand?—E.D., Landing, New Jersey

Why not use your left and see how it goes? Also, the next time you give him a hand job, interview him. "Does that feel good? Should I go faster? Slower? More pressure?" It may make you both laugh, but it's a quick way to learn what he likes.

While making out with a girl, I felt a nub at the top of her butt crack. I've heard that every human has a gene for a tail. Do some people actually have one?—E.W., Washington, D.C.

You're complaining about getting a little tail? Your date has an extended coccyx. No big deal.

This past summer Congressman Bill Janklow of South Dakota sped through a stop sign into the path of a motorcyclist, who was killed. The news coverage mentioned that Janklow's 1995 Cadillac had a factory-installed "black box" like one you'd find on an airplane. What sort of data does it store? Can it verify your speed? Which vehicles have these boxes, and can they be removed or disabled?—D.N., Sioux Falls, South Dakota

The latest boxes record your speed during the few seconds before impact, as well as whether you accelerated or braked and whether your seat belt was fastened. Janklow's box was too old to provide anything useful, but in a similar case in Florida the data helped convict a man charged with manslaughter. He had been driving his 2002 Trans Am on a residential street when he collided with a car pulling out of a driveway; two teenagers were killed. He admitted to going 60 mph. The accident investigator calculated his speed at 98 mph. The black box recorded it as high as 114 mph. He got 30 years. As many as 40 million vehicles, including every GM since 2000 and every Ford since 2002, have electronic data recorders. Safety researchers, insurers and prosecutors love EDRs; opponents see them as a potential violation of your right against self-incrimination (one defense attorney compared the technology to "having a government agent in the backseat"). Automakers take the position that the data belongs to the vehicle's owner (GM collects it for safety studies only with permission), but that doesn't stop a judge from issuing a court order. On July 1 California will become the first state to require automakers to inform buyers if their new cars have EDRs. The technology is difficult to remove because it's integrated with the system that controls the air bags.

Is it ethical for a patient to ask out his nurse?—B.S., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Sure. She's already seen your penis. But it's not ethical for her to accept.

A female swinger who is a friend of my wife's wanted to have a gang bang. Her husband lined up four single guys, but his wife was disappointed because the fun lasted only an hour. When my wife told me this story, I said I wasn't surprised. Single guys are into pleasing themselves, which is why they're single. Married guys are into pleasing women, which is why they're married. I know this isn't always the case, but what does the Advisor think?—W.B., College Station, Texas

That's not a bad setup to get yourself invited. The reason four married guys would last longer is that they'd each be thinking, I better take this slow, because it's never going to happen again.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com.*

ADVISOR RAW DATA

FIVE DECADES OF SEX, STATS AND STRANGENESS

"I've been seeing a certain young lady. She's a great kid, but I don't share her enthusiasm for marriage. I'd like to call a halt to matters. But how?"
—first question asked of the Advisor

12 LETTERS THAT DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT*

**but not for lack of trying*

(1) "Fleas are ruining my life...."

(2) "I've had several nervous breakdowns. Obviously I can't be an astronaut or an airline pilot. But could I be a lawyer?"

(3) "Can a human catch any animal venereal diseases? I own a large dog, and I was on my knees and elbows once, searching for a CD, when..."

(4) "Do you know of any movies in which love is portrayed as the main theme but with lots of penis-in-vagina shots?"

(5) "Do you think my gallbladder problems are related to my coffee enemas?"

(6) "Our mother-son relationship has gone to the next level, and now I'm pregnant. How do I tell my husband?"

(7) From a prisoner: "Can you tell me who sells the book *Escape and Evasion*? I'd also like information about GPS systems."

(8) "You missed the boat with the reader concerned about his wife's pale areolae. Why not have her areolae tattooed dark brown? Dear Abby would have thought of that."

(9) "The ghosts of my parents often visit our house. We're planning to move. Are there any religious procedures that will get them to come to our new house?"

(10) "Although I'm a Christian, here is a list of the things I would do if Marie Osmond were here with me...."

(11) "Whenever I cover the head of my penis with purple nail polish, I glue the hole shut so none will go in. I've enclosed four photos. Please write back if you would like to know more."

(12) "I have found the perfect toothbrush. If I buy 200 of them to last me the next 40 years, can you provide storage instructions?"

40 Percentage of narcoleptics who have fallen asleep while climaxing.

"We think that's illegal."

—suggested by a reader as an all-purpose response to every question

50, 6, 0

Percentage of women who said yes to each of three questions posed by an attractive stranger: (1) Would you go out on a date with me? (2) Would you go back to my apartment? (3) Would you have sex with me?

50, 69, 75

Percentage of men who said yes to the same questions.

Frank M. Robinson, who edited the column from 1969 to 1973, left for California to co-write a novel that became a basis for *The Towering Inferno*.

28 mph

Speed at which the first spurt of ejaculate leaves a man's body.

"You bastard!"

—two-word letter following our advice to a woman who wanted to give her future husband a thrill on their wedding night. We suggested she not have sex with him for a month prior.

12 Percentage of men who have erections larger than **7.2** inches.

FIVE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ANSWERED IN FIVE WORDS OR FEWER

1. How much are my PLAYBOYS worth?
Keep your job. Millions saved.

2. Can you tell me how to get a penis enlargement?
No. You're normal. Move along.

3. My girlfriend told me about her sexual past, and now I can't stop thinking about all the guys she's been with.
Get over it. She's yours.

4. I'm falling in love with a close female friend.
Tell her. You'll always wonder.

5. How do we arrange a threesome?
Friend, hooker, swinger or luck.

"My musical wild oats are screaming to be sown, but it means giving up my secure job. Any suggestions?"

—B.M., from Brooklyn, in a 1965 letter. B.M. turned out to be Barry Manilow.

THE BOGEYMAN OF CAMPAIGN REFORM

SENATOR MITCH McCONNELL HAS THE RIGHT IDEA ABOUT A BAD LAW

If you watch the Sunday morning talk shows, the battle over campaign finance reform appears simple: Republican senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky is the bogeyman. It's good versus evil, John McCain versus Mitch McConnell, in a fight for the soul of American democracy. It seems an unenviable position for the Senate majority whip, but it is one that he relishes. He opposed the McCain-Feingold bill that passed in the Senate and the Shays-Meehan bill that passed in the House, both of which banned soft-money contributions to political parties. The two bills became the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, signed by President Bush in March 2002 and enacted in November 2002. McConnell then fought to have his name attached as lead plaintiff to the legal challenge to the law, a case pending before the Supreme Court. McConnell characterizes the bill as both unconstitutional and ineffectual. The High Court will decide the former. Lost in the vilification of McConnell is that he's right about the latter.

Soft money—donations to national parties used for issue ads and party-building activities not tied to specific candidates—generated public ire when Enron, WorldCom and Arthur Andersen were found to have given out wads of it. When that outrage revived Shays-Meehan and McCain-Feingold in early 2002, McConnell almost singlehandedly tried to derail the bills. "I don't know Senator McConnell well enough to assess his motivations," says Marty Meehan (D.–Mass.), who co-sponsored the House bill, "but I can say that he is a formidable opponent of most of the proposals I consider important to reducing the influence of special interests.

"Even though money will still play a role in politics, BCRA goes a long way toward making that system more open and accountable. Unlimited soft-money donations to political parties—sometimes even involving donations exceeding $1 million—gave rise to a particularly serious appearance of corruption."

"When we passed the law, we weren't looking at what would be different today," says Christopher Shays (R.–Conn.), the House bill's other sponsor. "We were looking at what would be different in the future. Enron and WorldCom gave $4 million and $3 million in a particular election cycle—out of corporate treasury money. There was nothing to stop those figures from being $40 million and $30 million a few years from now.

"The most noteworthy benefit is that the role of individual citizens will be restored to preeminence in the political process, which has been corrupted by the ability of corporations, unions and wealthy individuals to exert undue influence. Corporations, nonprofits and unions will still be integral parts of policymaking through their lobbying efforts but not because of the size of their checkbooks."

McConnell disputes this, as is clear from his comments on the Senate floor:

"For those who wanted to reduce the amount of money in politics, this certainly will not do that. In a 100 percent hard-money world, as defined by McCain-Feingold, what we will do is take none of the money out of politics. We will just take the parties out of politics. Parties are the one entity in America that will support a challenger. Parties are filters. This new world won't take a penny out of politics, not a penny. It will all be spent. It just won't be spent by the parties."

Georgetown law professor Roy Schotland agrees with McConnell's assessment. "BCRA is the worst law ever passed in terms of what it does to our political system," he says. "If everything in it is stricken by the Supreme Court, you're going to see a lot more money spent than before. If the whole thing is sustained, you're going to see a lot more money spent than before. You'll see the big givers rolling just as before, with one exception: The parties will be a much smaller part of the scene. Nonparty groups—the single-interest, single-issue groups—will be much more important.

"All our experience since the last campaign reform 29 years ago is that the funds will continue to flow, just in different channels. Money will flow to all kinds of new nonparty, noncandidate entities—and they can do whatever they want." Barred from party-run mechanisms regulated by the Federal Election Commission, corporations and other big donors will instead make their contributions to tax-exempt organizations that have no party or candidate

BY TIMOTHY MOHR

affiliations and are regulated only by the IRS. A company that might have given $2 million to the Democratic Party before BCRA would now give that same money tax-free to a nonprofit—call it Americans for Good Things. This group, which might even have been set up by former Democratic aides, would transfer the $2 million to another type of tax-exempt organization that spends the money on political activities. Once that transfer is made, this second nonprofit would have to report only that it got the money from Americans for Good Things, not from the company.

"As candidates look for more ways to raise money, they have realized how flexible charity law is," notes Frances Hill, a University of Miami professor who specializes in tax law. "That poses a terrible dilemma for the IRS, which has never seen itself as involved in elections."

Hard money—closely regulated contributions to specific candidates from political action committees and individuals—wins elections too. In this area, what makes Senator McConnell's opposition to BCRA counterintuitive is that the law benefits Republicans more than Democrats. Though Republicans have led in both hard and soft fund-raising, their edge in hard money is much more pronounced. Corporations provide three quarters of all PAC money; of that, 65 percent goes to Republicans. Republicans also lead at all levels of individual contributions permitted under BCRA, which raised the cap for total contributions by an individual from $25,000 to $95,000 in each two-year election cycle.

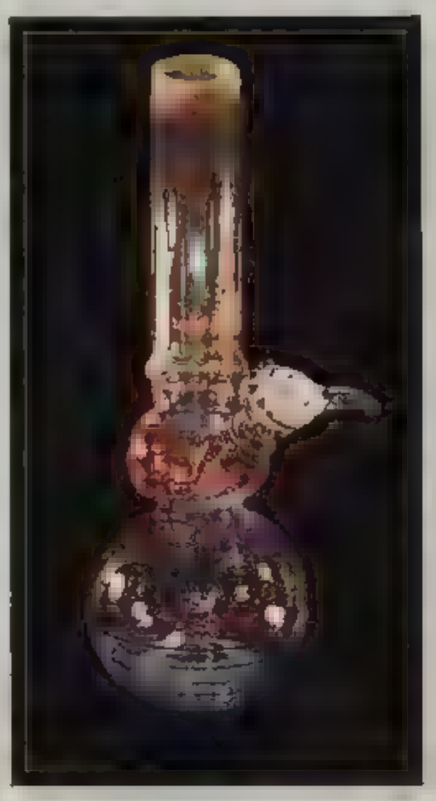
The soft-money ban and the boost in the hard-money ceiling seem to cause another phenomenon: more cash than ever before being shoveled into leadership PACs. Incumbents maintain leadership PACs not for their own campaigns but to throw money around to others. These PACs are unhampered by BCRA. The pacesetter in leadership PAC receipts is Bill Frist (R.–Tenn.), who as Senate majority leader has raked in seven times more in the current election cycle than he did in the last. In the first half of 2003 more money was doled out by McConnell's PAC than by that of any other Republican senator.

Supporters of BCRA didn't set out to pass a bad law. And yet, whatever the Supreme Court decides this winter, big money still wins. The losers are the 99.7 percent of Americans unwilling or unable to contribute. The worst thing that could happen to the electoral process would be for finance reform to end with the Court's ruling. That is true even if the decision is celebrated as a defeat for the Kentucky senator portrayed as the enemy of reform.

EXTRA: FEDS JAIL CHONG FOR BONGS

AMERICA FINALLY SAFE FROM AGING HIPPIE THREAT

On September 11 a judge in Pittsburgh sentenced Tommy Chong, half of the comedy team Cheech and Chong, to nine months in federal prison for violating the law that makes it illegal to sell or transport drug paraphernalia. As part of a plea agreement, Chong, 65, closed his three-year-old business, Chong Glass, and forfeited its inventory, $103,514 in cash and two websites, as well as his personal collection of bongs. Chong also paid a $20,000 fine. The comedian had been caught up in Operation Pipe Dreams, an effort by the Justice Department to shut down shops that sell pipes, roach clips and small scales. Prior to his incarceration we spoke with Chong about his conviction.



PLAYBOY: You're well-known. Weren't you asking for trouble with this?

CHONG: When we started we had no idea that selling pipes was illegal, though we knew better than to sell them as marijuana pipes. We sold them as movie memorabilia, as art or for tobacco. We talked to other glassmakers, and they said, "As long as you don't ship to Pennsylvania or Iowa you'll be okay." In late 2002 we kept getting online orders from Pittsburgh. My son, who ran the company, would reject them. But then a salesman we had just hired filled a $6,000 order from Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. It's suspicious. According to the people I've talked to, the Justice Department shopped this sting around to every state, and only two, Pennsylvania and Iowa, would get involved.

PLAYBOY: Why did you plead guilty?

CHONG: The prosecutor told me that if I didn't they would go after my son and my wife.

PLAYBOY: At the time of the raids, the head of the DEA said, "People selling drug paraphernalia are as much a part of trafficking as silencers are a part of homicide." We've seen how cops catch killers. How do they capture 65-year-old bong dealers?

CHONG: They gathered evidence while I was signing pipes at a head shop in Texas. A line of fans two blocks long had formed outside, including these two guys with backpacks. One went to the corner and set his pack down—it had a hidden camera inside—while the other chose a few pipes. One guy asked me what made my pipes so good, and I said, "They're healthier because of the water, which filters out impurities." He said, "So it's a healthier way to smoke pot?" I said, "Yeah." They used that as evidence.

PLAYBOY: Did your history hurt you in court?

CHONG: The prosecutor told the judge that I had appeared in movies that glorified pot and trivialized law enforcement. If that's a crime,

everybody from *Police Academy* better watch their back.

PLAYBOY: How did the raid go down?

CHONG: I heard a bang on the door at 5:30 A.M. When I opened it DEA agents in flak jackets rushed in with their guns drawn. They went from room to room, yelling, "Clear! Clear! Clear!" They kept telling me, "You're not under arrest! You're not under arrest!" It was very *Alice in Wonderland*. I asked if an Enron executive had gotten loose in the neighborhood.

PLAYBOY: How much pot did they find?

CHONG: They said it was a pound. The reason they found that much is that my fans are always giving me stuff, and I don't smoke nearly as often as my character does. They took all my bongs—I had a lot of them in a display cabinet—but left my opium pipes, which I also collect. When the feds asked the LAPD if they wanted to arrest me for the pot, they left in a hurry. It was a bong bust, not a pot bust.

PLAYBOY: Were you surprised by the nine-month sentence?

CHONG: Two guys in Oregon who ran a much larger operation got house arrest. But I have no animosity toward the prosecutor or the judge. They're doing their job, which is to put people away. My job is to read the law.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever done time?

CHONG: I got arrested for joyriding when I was 16. Now I have my first strike. Can't own a firearm. Can't vote. Pot's becoming a misdemeanor everywhere, yet selling a smoking device is a felony.

PLAYBOY: Where do you go with this?

CHONG: I plan to do all that I can to vote the Republicans out of office. I see these busts as the equivalent of dinosaurs thrashing their tails as they die.

PLAYBOY: During your appearances before the judge you said you would be willing to make antidrug ads. What would be in them?

CHONG: The tango. Seven years ago my wife took salsa lessons, and I saw her perform with her teacher. It was so sexy, and I was so not involved. I started smoking less because it's hard to dance when you're stoned. I suggested to the judge that I could work with ghetto kids through salsa.

PLAYBOY: When did you first smoke?

CHONG: As a teenager. A Chinese jazz musician handed me a joint and a Lenny Bruce record.

PLAYBOY: You may find it easier to get weed in prison than on the outside.

CHONG: I'll have to write you from prison. But I won't mention any pot.

PLAYBOY: We could use code.

CHONG: Dear PLAYBOY, the tomatoes in here are really ripe.

5 WAYS TO FIX ...THE ENVIRONMENT

BY CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN

(1) Rely on Energy Star

The Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program, which labels products to indicate their efficiency, saves enough energy each year to power 15 million homes and remove the pollution equivalent of 15 million cars. It also saves consumers $7 billion.

(2) Don't muddy the waters

When you overfertilize your lawn, put too much pesticide on plants or throw butts out car windows, it's almost the same as directly polluting our waterways. Pollution from water runoff, as well as car oil drained onto driveways, ends up in the ocean. As a result, every six months our coastlines are damaged by as much oil as was spilled by the *Exxon Valdez*.

(3) Seek breathtaking solutions

The president's Clear Skies proposal would force utilities to reduce the emission of their three worst pollutants by 70 percent over 15 years. It's a realistic goal that will save thousands of lives and billions of dollars without sending costs out of sight. Congress should also push automakers harder to improve gas mileage.

(4) Recycle land

We must encourage the redevelopment of abandoned properties rather than promote sprawl in open areas. Every green acre that is developed adds to the strain on public services, increases the likelihood of water problems and may contribute to global warming.

(5) Lose the rhetoric

We shouldn't look to the government for all the answers any more than we should expect business to solve every problem or nonprofit groups to do it alone. Regulations have a place, but voluntary efforts can often get us further, faster.

Whitman headed the EPA from 2001 to June 2003.

MARGINALIA

WHEN WILLIAM DOLGE returned from his work-release program, authorities smelled alcohol on his breath. He denied he had been drinking, saying instead that he'd eaten four burritos made with beef marinated in beer and tequila. A judge asked for the recipe, then let Dolge off. Dolge's attorney shared the recipe with the *National Law Journal:* (1) Cut a 3-pound chuck roast into 2-inch pieces, season with salt and pepper, dredge in flour, and brown in small batches in vegetable oil. (2) Remove meat. (3) Cook 2 chopped yellow onions in remaining fat. (4) Add 3 chopped poblano chilies and 4 seeded and minced jalapeños and cook 4 minutes. (5) Stir in 3 minced cloves of garlic and cook 2 minutes. (6) Add 1½ pounds roasted, peeled and chopped tomatillos, 2 tablespoons dried oregano, 1 tablespoon ground cumin and a bunch of chopped cilantro. (7) Cook the meat separately in stock until tender, then dry it and marinate in a bottle of Irish red beer, 1½ cups Cuervo Especial tequila and three quarters of a bottle of Samuel Adams dark ale. (8) Drain, combine meat with sauce and serve in tortillas with shredded cheese.

IN THE 217 YEARS since it was adopted, the Constitution has been updated 27 times. Last year Representative Jesse Jackson Jr. (D.–Ill.) proposed adding nine new amendments: (1) "All citizens of the U.S. shall enjoy the right to a public education of equal high quality." (2) "The right to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S., any state or any other public or private person or entity, except that the U.S. or any state may establish regulations narrowly tailored to produce efficient and honest elections." (3) "All citizens of the U.S. shall enjoy the right to health care of equal high quality." (4) "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or by any state on account of sex. Reproductive rights for women under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or any state." (5) "All citizens of the U.S. shall have a right to decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing." (6) "All citizens of the U.S. shall have a right to a clean, safe and sustainable environment." (7) "The Congress shall tax all persons progressively in proportion to the income which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the U.S." (8) "Every citizen has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment." (9) "Every citizen, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. Every citizen who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration,

MARGINALIA

ensuring for themselves and their family an existence worthy of human dignity and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. Every citizen who works has the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of their interests."

FOUR TIMES EACH YEAR the California Department of Corrections conducts a census of the roughly 7,100 prisoners who are serving life sentences under the state's three-strikes law. For about a third of the inmates the final strike was a robbery or a burglary. Other last straws from the most recent report include narcotics possession (665), weapons possession (385), assault with a deadly weapon (372), assault and battery (358), petty theft (349), lewd act with a child (236), vehicle theft (225), narcotics sales (195), receiving stolen property (169), grand theft (120), rape (118), forgery or fraud (62), murder (57), kidnapping (49), DUI (42), manslaughter (38), forced oral copulation (29), narcotics manufacturing (29), selling marijuana (29), arson (26), forced penetration with object (19), escape (14), forced sodomy (11), vehicular manslaughter (8) and possessing marijuana to sell (4).

FROM A MOTION BY PUBLIC DEFENDER ERIC VANATTA on behalf of a high school student in Fort Collins, Colorado accused of disorderly conduct (the motion was unearthed by TheSmokingGun.com): "The defendant was suspected of smoking in the boys' room. When confronted, he allegedly called the principal 'a fucker, a fag and a fucking fag.' The question presented by the case is not whether a juvenile should be calling his principal a fucker or a fucking fag. Rather, it is one of constitutionality. Although the defendant could have selected a more desirable choice in prose, such as 'I respectfully dissent' or 'I am disappointed with your attitude, sir, and politely ask you to cease and desist,' the use of *fucker* or *fucking* nonetheless does not amount to criminal conduct in this context. The statement 'I don't need this fucking school anyway' in concert with violently slamming a door has been found to be protected speech. 'Shut the fuck up' and words to the effect of 'Don't let the door hit you on the ass on the way out' were ruled to be protected. A juvenile calling a police officer 'fucking pig, fucking kangaroo' during a traffic contact was found to be protected. A juvenile telling her principal, 'Fuck this, I don't have to take this shit' and 'Fuck you, I don't have to do what you tell me' was found to be protected. The state has the power to protect its citizenry from actual harm and thus the power to outlaw one yelling 'Fire!' in a crowded theater. However, yelling 'Fuck!' in a crowded theater does not create a clear and present danger." Vanatta didn't get a chance to argue his motion. Instead, he cut a deal that allowed the student to have the charge dismissed if he stayed out of trouble.

VOTING WITH CONVICTION

HOW A FEW EX-CONS CAN SWING AN ELECTION

The U.S. has expanded the vote from rich white males to include every competent adult, with two exceptions: prisoners and ex-cons. Only Maine and Vermont allow inmates to vote. In most states even felons free on parole or probation cannot cast ballots; in others, they must wait up to five years after their release. Some states restrict felons even if they were convicted elsewhere. Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi and Virginia effectively ban ex-cons from the polls forever. Today the patchwork of laws prevents an estimated 3 million Americans from voting, including up to 13 percent of black men. The fact that the hundreds of thousands of released felons living in Florida could easily have swung the 2000 election has not gone unnoticed. Activists argue that barring felons from voting is a de facto violation of the Voting Rights Act, which forbids racism. (Following the Civil War, Southern legislators disenfranchised felons convicted of what they saw as "black crimes"—wife beating, for example, but not murder. Today the chief culprits are drug laws.) More felons will be at the polls this fall. Alabama has restored the vote to most ex-cons. Connecticut enfranchised those on probation. Nevada added first-time nonviolent offenders. Virginia felons must still petition the governor, but he reduced the application from 13 pages plus four recommendations to a single page.

THE DEBUNKER

MYTH: THE MAIN HINDRANCE TO NUCLEAR POWER IS THE PUBLIC'S CONCERN ABOUT ITS SAFETY

REALITY: Safety isn't the real issue. Nuke power hasn't become ubiquitous in the U.S. because it's so damn expensive. Even after decades of subsidies, it can't compete with other forms of energy. The cost of a kilowatt-hour of electricity generated by nuclear power (including plant costs, as required when estimating the price per unit for other forms of energy) is about seven cents. The national average for a kilowatt-hour from coal is roughly five cents, and from natural gas, four cents. Wind power, at three to five cents a kilowatt-hour on average, is already cheaper than nuclear power. What's more amazing

about the continuing high cost of nuclear power is the scale of subsidies lavished on the industry. In the past 50 years wind, solar and nuclear power combined have been federally funded to the tune of $145 billion. Although 95 percent of those funds went to nuclear energy, the other two forms managed dramatic drops in unit costs. Some versions of the White House–backed energy bill offer federal loan guarantees to cover half the cost of the first new nuclear plants to be built in 30 years. The Congressional Budget Office warns that it expects these plants to be "uneconomic to operate."

NEWSFRONT

Bust of Freedom

KINGSTON, JAMAICA—City officials commissioned bronze sculptures for a downtown park to mark the anniversary of the abolition of slavery. Titled *Redemption Song,* the 11-foot-tall statues caused an uproar. Here is a sampling of the reactions:

Lloyd Smith of *The Jamaican Daily Observer:* "This can be described as a rape of our democracy. What does nudity have to do with emancipation?"

Mark Wignall, also of the *Daily Observer:* "Just because Europe's classical statues had small penises does not mean Jamaica must follow suit."

Kingsley Thomas, chairman of the Emancipation Park Trust: "Anyone who sees two naked bodies and the first thing that comes to their mind is sex is sick. It's two people washing away the vestiges of slavery and human subjugation."

Load, Shift, Copy

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY—The chief executive of a company that makes an anticopying system for CDs threatened to sue a Princeton student who had published a paper on how to circumvent the technology. The student's conclusion: If you hold down the shift key for 30 seconds each time you load a CD with MediaMax, the music can be copied without restriction. The company says it believes most people won't do this because they know it's not right—and because they want access to bonus features.

Blow-Job Victims

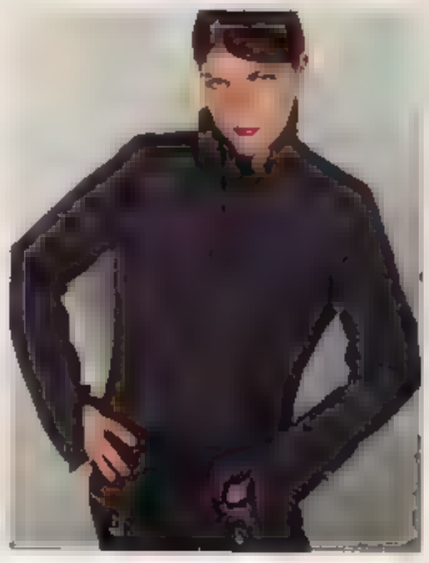
BEAVER, PENNSYLVANIA—Encouraged by classmates, a seventh-grade girl gave a boy a blow job on the school bus. After officials expelled both students, the girl's mother appealed the decision, noting that the school's policy did not specifically state that students can't have sex on the bus. Earlier, in suburban Detroit, the parents of an eighth-grade boy who was suspended after receiving oral sex during class sued the district, claiming their son couldn't escape the BJ because his leg was in a cast.

Wild Blue Yonder

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO—An Air Force Academy cadet built a porn site from his dorm room to advertise sex parties, which he videotaped and sold online for $14 each. When the brass found out, they charged the cadet with conduct unbecoming an officer. A military judge told the entrepreneur, "In a twisted way you demonstrated the leadership and management skills sought by the Air Force." Then he sentenced him to nine months in prison.

Electric Encounter

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS—The No-Contact Jacket is the latest in self-defense outerwear. If a woman feels threatened, she turns a key in the sleeve and squeezes a trigger. Anyone who touches the fabric gets an 80,000-volt shock. Designed by an MIT scientist and his girlfriend, the $900 coat has a lofty purpose. Namely, its creators believe that "protecting and empowering the female body from unauthorized contact will allow a woman to inhabit her environment in a more confident way and thus redefine and renegotiate her physical space and identity."



No Español

PAPILLION, NEBRASKA—A judge hearing a visitation dispute ordered a Mexican American father not to speak "Hispanic" to his five-year-old daughter. The girl's mother, who is Polish American, said the girl had complained that her ex-con father spoke Spanish too often. The judge said it wasn't fair to the girl to "put her in a situation where people are communicating in a language she doesn't understand." In a similar case in Texas in 1995, a judge told a mother in a custody dispute that by speaking Spanish to her five-year-old she was "abusing the child and relegating her to the position of a housemaid." He later apologized.

READER RESPONSE

My firm represented Oliverio Martinez, who was interrogated by police while in intense pain in an emergency room without being read his Miranda rights ("Intensive Care: Interrogation or Torture?" *The Playboy Forum,* October). He took his case to the Supreme Court, which ruled against his Fifth Amendment claim.

I would like to dispel any impression left by your commentary that aggressive questioning or coercion by police now has the approval of the Court. You quote only the part of Justice Clarence Thomas's majority opinion in which he says that failure to give a Miranda warning is not a sufficient basis for a lawsuit against the officer who interrogated Martinez. Justice David Souter wrote a second majority opinion that sent the case back to a lower court to decide if Martinez's due process rights had been violated. That court said they had been. The suit is now before a trial court but has not been resolved.

You call Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg's opinion a dissent. But she affirmed Souter's opinion, calling the right to remain silent "one of the great landmarks in man's struggle to make himself civilized." The privilege, she wrote, "should instruct and control all of officialdom."

Thankfully it is Ginsberg's vision that remains in force and not that of your writer, who concludes that "excruciating methods of interrogation appear to be excusable—as long as prosecutors do not charge you."

R. Samuel Paz
Culver City, California

I represent Ben Chavez, the officer accused of being too aggressive while questioning Martinez. Police interrogation can cross the line to a "conscience-shocking level," but the Supreme Court says that occurs only if the questioning is both "intended to injure in some way and unjustifiable by any government interest." The trial court will decide that issue. In today's society police must be granted wide latitude to protect the rights of the public.

Alan Wisotsky
Oxnard, California

Martinez rode his bike down a dark path in an area known for narcotics activity, fled after a knife was discovered in his waistband (who carries a knife like that?) and took an officer's gun. Chavez's "aggressive" interrogation basically consisted of asking, "What happened?" Isn't it conceivable that Chavez, who arrived after the incident, was merely checking the facts against what he had been told by the arresting officers? There are times when cops abuse their power, but this doesn't sound like one of them.

Glen Vick
Sacramento, California

E-mail: forum@playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

KEEP AMERICA FROM VOTING ACT

REMEMBER HOW WE WERE GOING TO FIX THE FLORIDA DEBACLE?

BY ISHMAEL REED

The U.S. has the world's oldest continuous democracy—and one of the world's lowest voter turnouts. Those Americans who do attempt to vote are often prevented from doing so. The presidential election of 2000—which was such a mess that the Supreme Court had to intervene—is merely the most prominent example of how voters are kept from the polls.

To fix these problems, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act in October 2002. On the surface the legislation looks fine. It defines what constitutes a vote and requires states to allow voters to correct ballot errors. It also authorizes $325 million to update the sort of archaic punch card systems that caused such difficulties in Florida, although the preferred solution—touch screens—presents its own opportunities for fraud. Last fall the ACLU sued unsuccessfully to delay the gubernatorial recall in California, arguing that thousands of votes in six counties with large minority populations would not be counted because of punch card errors.

The media discussion is dominated by white men who see the loss of minority votes as not a big deal. Booker T. Washington warned white Americans that the injustices they practiced against black Americans might eventually be used against them. Exemplifying this process was the sting aimed at Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry. The media played the Barry entrapment for laughs. But emboldened prosecutors later tried to ensnare President Clinton. Similarly, those who apparently desire one-party rule might decide to disenfranchise white voters next. Republicans in committee added provisions to the Help America Vote Act that could be viewed as sinister moves to reduce votes cast by Democrats. One such addition to the act requires voters to provide a driver's license number (or, if they lack one, to disclose the last four digits of their Social Security number). First-time voters must show identification, preferably a photo ID, at the polls. You could argue that such provisions are biased against low-income voters, particularly minorities. A Justice Department study in Louisiana in 1994 found that blacks there were four to five times less likely than whites to have a driver's license or photo ID.

HAVA doesn't address a major reason that thousands were cast off the rolls in Florida. There was evidence that Republican officials had waged a campaign to disenfranchise black voters. "In the months leading up to the balloting," writes journalist Greg Palast, "Florida secretary of state Katherine Harris, in coordination with Governor Jeb Bush, ordered local elections supervisors to purge 57,700 voters from registries" because they "were felons not entitled to vote." According to Palast, 90 percent of these people weren't felons. But they were largely African Americans and Hispanics (about 54 percent), and most of them were also Democrats.

The disclosure drew a yawn. When members of the Congressional Black Caucus sought to object formally to the counting of Florida's electoral votes, no senator would sponsor them. The media cast them as malcontents. "Except for the black community and some die-hard partisans," wrote Thomas Patterson in *The Vanishing Voter,* "the Florida wrangling was cause for neither anger nor anxiety. Only 10 percent believed it to be a constitutional crisis, and within two weeks, half said the dispute had gone on too long already." (After the 1876 Hayes-Tilden election—when Tilden won the vote and Hayes gained office by compromising with pro-Confederate Democrats—people took to the streets.)

If you consider the Republican amendments to HAVA, the California recall election (in which people with links to the White House played a role), the FBI bugging of Philadelphia's black mayor (revealed a few weeks before an election), the purging of voters in the 2000 election, the suspicious redistricting of Texas and the use of Republican poll watchers in black districts during the Kentucky gubernatorial race, you might conclude that elements in the Republican Party are intent on disenfranchising those they can't persuade through argument and debate. You might even assume the effort has been an attempt by the GOP to paint the Democrats as the party of blacks and Latinos, as opposed to the Republicans, the party of whites.

"We need more active monitoring of elections by nonpartisan black organizations," says Ron Walters, professor of government at the University of Maryland. "Black voters need to know their voting rights. We have to clear up voter-eligibility problems. And we need to file suit for violations of voting rights."

Wouldn't it be ironic if, under a new, ill-conceived version of manifest destiny, with the U.S. spending hundreds of billions of dollars to drag other countries, kicking and screaming, into a democratic form of government, we lost democracy at home?

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: KIEFER SUTHERLAND

A candid conversation with the star of 24 about what really happened with Julia Roberts, his dad's worst advice and why his show is like Dynasty on crack

No one has worse days than Jack Bauer. For the lead character of 24—the hit Fox series told in real time, with each episode presenting 60 minutes from Bauer's day for 24 shows—every hour is a bad hour, full of more deaths, disasters and family problems than the Sopranos face in a year. Starring Kiefer Sutherland as a key member of the U.S. Counter Terrorist Unit, the show in its first season dealt with a plot to assassinate a presidential candidate, the kidnapping of Bauer's daughter and the murder of his wife. The second season included a nuclear bomb going off in the Mojave Desert. And those were among Bauer's less eventful hours. This season he tries to foil the release of a deadly virus on U.S. soil.

For Sutherland, 24 is the proverbial second chance. A leading man in the 1980s—an unofficial member of the Brat Pack, which included Rob Lowe, Emilio Estevez and Sean Penn—he found heroic roles tougher to come by in the 1990s. His popularity took a major hit when girlfriend Julia Roberts dumped him just days before their highly publicized wedding, creating a media feeding frenzy not unlike that surrounding Ben and J. Lo. Sutherland's career seemed to peak in his 20s, and from there he was relegated to quirky indie flicks and standard-issue psychopath roles in films such as A Time to Kill. Now, with 24, he's a hero again, an actual TV star in an era when most shows bank on ensemble casts. The success of 24 hasn't hurt his movie career, either; Taking Lives, in which he stars with Angelina Jolie, comes out this month.

Born Kiefer William Frederick Dempsey George Rufus Sutherland (his father, actor Donald Sutherland, bestowed those names on him and another seven on Kiefer's twin sister, Rachel) in London on December 21, 1966, he grew up in Toronto. Kiefer's mother, Shirley Douglas, is an actress and a political activist. His parents separated when he and his sister were four.

Sutherland was a spirited and defiant kid who decided to quit school before his 16th birthday. He lived like a fugitive, sleeping in the park or at different friends' homes until his father agreed to help him out on the promise that he would reenroll in school. He did, but Sutherland also auditioned for film parts and landed the lead in an acclaimed Canadian film, The Bay Boy. School suddenly became a dead issue.

Sutherland left Canada to do commercials in New York City. At the age of 18 he drove to Los Angeles, where he shared a house with four other young actors, including Robert Downey Jr. and Sarah Jessica Parker. He quickly made a name for himself in two 1986 films, At Close Range, with Sean Penn and Christopher Walken, and Stand By Me, as a small-town bully. Other notable films followed: The Lost Boys, Young Guns, Flatliners, A Few Good Men, The Cowboy Way and Dark City.

After learning to ride and to rope, Sutherland decided to take a break from acting to compete in rodeos; he won his first competition in Phoenix. He lived on a Montana ranch for six years and then owned a 500-head cattle ranch in central California for a while before returning to L.A.

When he was 20 he married Camelia Kath. They have a daughter, Sarah, but the marriage didn't last. In 1991 Sutherland was engaged to Roberts, whom he'd met while filming Flatliners. Sutherland married again in 1996 and is currently separated.

PLAYBOY sent Contributing Editor **Lawrence Grobel** *to talk with Sutherland during the filming of 24 to see if his real days are as intense as his fictional ones.*

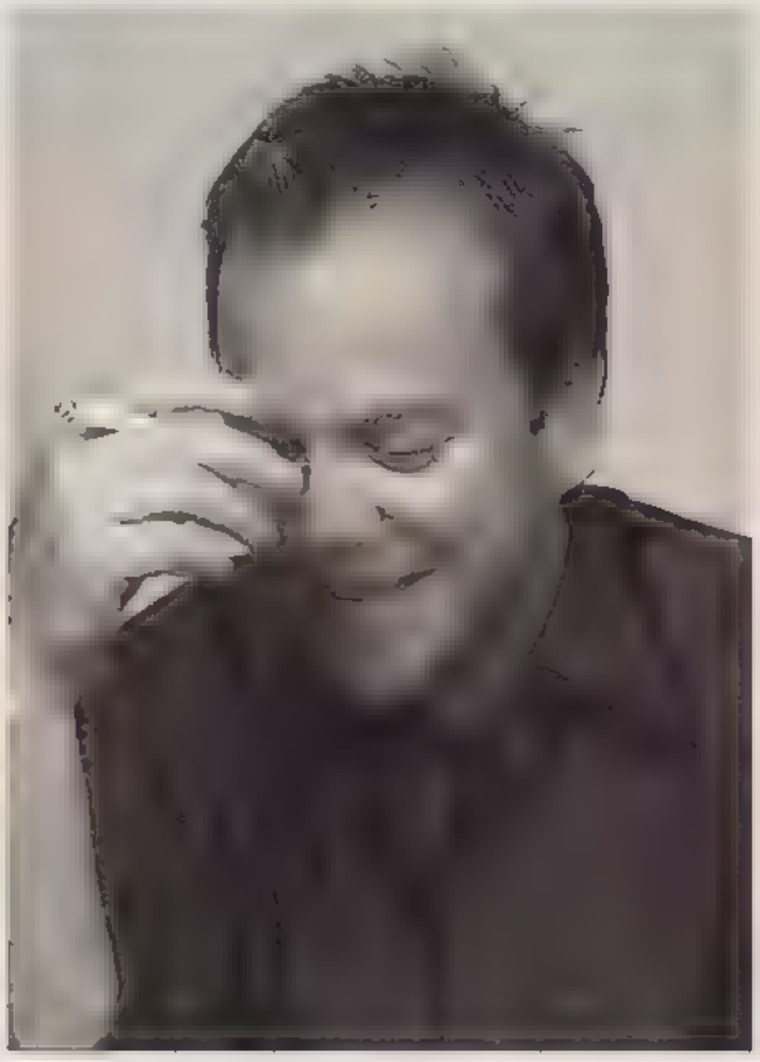
PLAYBOY: You're partway through the third season of *24*. Any burnout?

SUTHERLAND: No, and I like that Jack is actually driving it this time. It's a significant shift in the nature of our show.

PLAYBOY: Do you mean that your character is less of a victim?

SUTHERLAND: One of the main differences this year is that, before, all the secrets and moles were things for Jack to figure out; Jack is the secret this time. The show deals with a virus that is

"You can't do all these interviews about how wonderful you both are and then when it falls apart six days before your wedding not expect people to have a shot at you. I know Julia and I unwittingly asked for it."



"Do I think it's important to the show that Jack eventually dies and does so when you least expect it? Yeah. It will be very obvious when people start going, 'Oh, please. How many bad days can one guy have?'"

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAV D ROSE

"I did drugs when I was 18, before Sarah was born. I liked the ceremony, the ritual of preparing cocaine as much as doing it. I did it for a year, loved it and then stopped. Now I feel the same way about cooking."

allegedly carried into the U.S. through Mexico in a bag of cocaine. Jack's the only one who knows what's going on. No one else does, not even the president. This operation is something that he elected to do. In the eighth or ninth episode he finally tells the president what's happening.

PLAYBOY: He tells him about the virus?

SUTHERLAND: Yes, and how he plans to obtain it. Everything up to that point—who really has it and what Jack's been doing—has been a lie.

PLAYBOY: And what happens?

SUTHERLAND: Not a lot I can tell you, except that there are some serious surprises. We have only a general idea of where it's going for six episodes at a time. The last six, nobody yet knows.

PLAYBOY: Is it a struggle to keep the show from going too far over the top?

SUTHERLAND: We're always flirting with that. It's like *Dynasty* on crack.

PLAYBOY: Do you see Jack Bauer as a kind of superhero?

SUTHERLAND: No, the opposite. I like the fact that this is a guy who is obviously talented at what he does, yet he also struggled with a marriage that was not working. He's in charge of the security of a nation but has a hard time handling a 16-year-old daughter. I like that a lot.

PLAYBOY: Were you against ending the first season on such a grim note, with the murder of your wife?

SUTHERLAND: Yes, vehemently. But I was wrong. It taught me that our show is not a democracy. There is a pecking order, and I'm third or fourth in line.

PLAYBOY: Is it true that you wanted Jack to die at the end of the second season?

SUTHERLAND: No, I'd like to do the show as long as possible. Do I think it's important to the show that Jack eventually dies and does so when you least expect it? Yeah. It will be very obvious when people start going, "Oh, please. How many bad days can one guy have?" The real star of the show is the time format. The only way the show can continue for a real long time, like *Law & Order,* is by changing the cast.

PLAYBOY: Prior to *24,* your movie career seemed based on playing psychos, creeps and outcasts.

SUTHERLAND: It's a living.

PLAYBOY: You've gone from that to a heroic leading man.

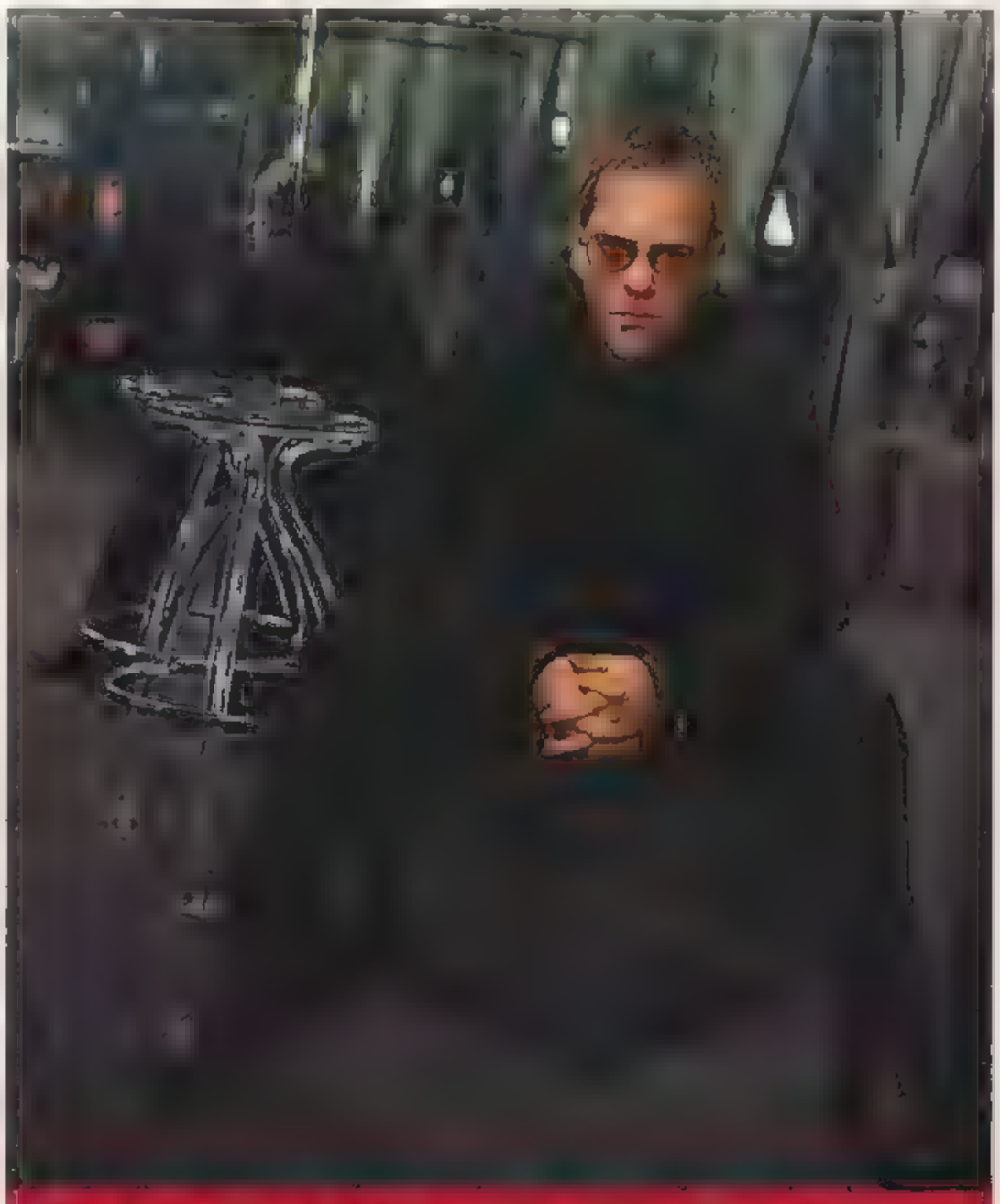
SUTHERLAND: It's one of the few opportunities I've had to do something like that. I don't look like your typical heroic leading man per se. It's not like I couldn't have done it five or 10 years ago; it just wasn't there.

PLAYBOY: Do you have a piece of the show so you'll get residuals forever?

SUTHERLAND: Not like Ray Romano has with his, but I'm doing fine.

PLAYBOY: You're a second-generation actor. Is it true you didn't really become aware of your father as an actor until you were 18?

SUTHERLAND: I was staying with a friend of our family's who had most of my father's films on videotape. I watched *Kelly's Heroes, MASH, Don't Look Now, The Eagle Has Landed, Fellini's Casanova* and *Start the Revolution Without Me.* I'd seen *Eye of the Needle, Ordinary People* and *The Dirty Dozen.* I remember feeling really embarrassed as a son not to have known how good he was. I phoned him and told him that. I was sorry that I didn't know him better.



The worst thing you can say about a few of us, myself included, is that we didn't fully grow up.

PLAYBOY: What type of advice did your father give you about acting?

SUTHERLAND: Don't get caught lying.

PLAYBOY: How do you know when you're lying during a performance?

SUTHERLAND: You can feel it. If you're trying to squeeze too much out of something, you'll know when you're bullshitting. Or if you're being lazy, you'll know that as well.

PLAYBOY: Has he ever given you any other advice?

SUTHERLAND: He gave me some horrible advice about getting married. It's such a sweet, funny story. I got married when I was very young, 20 years old. I loved that person, but I was nervous about it. We were in Quebec, where my dad has this fantastic farm, and we were taking a walk through the fields. I asked him what he thought. He said, "It will be great. Just approach marriage as if you were a butler. And then you can take pleasure in putting toothpaste on her toothbrush and in cooking for her. Just really enjoy that." I looked at him cross-eyed and went, "What the fuck are you talking about?" Anyway, I got married, and we had a beautiful daughter, but we didn't stay married for longer than 18 months. About four years later I was working with someone who had worked for my father for years, and I told him this story. He said, "Yeah, your dad told me about that question and his response. I said, 'Why on earth would you tell him that?' And he said, 'I don't know. I didn't know what to say!'" I loved my father for that. You do your best, and sometimes you just have to wing it. To say the obvious—"Oh, sweetheart, I think you're making the worst decision of your life"—is very hard when you think someone's excited about something. But that story makes me laugh.

PLAYBOY: Following that marriage was the public fiasco in 1991 when your engagement to Julia Roberts ended a few days before the wedding. When you read about Billy Bob and Angelina, or Ben and J. Lo, do you get a sense of "been there, done that"?

SUTHERLAND: I know what it's like to be in love with someone and have that trivialized. I also know that Julia and I unwittingly asked for it. You can't do all these interviews about how wonderful and fantastic you both are and then when it falls apart six days before your wedding not expect people to have a shot at you. I could see the wave building behind our heads when we broke up. I knew we'd have to hold our breath, because it was going to hurt. And it felt like that. But, like when you get hit by a rather large wave, if you relax, it will spin you around and spit you back out. If you fight it, you'll drown. I feel very bad for any couple trying to deal with how complicated that can be.

PLAYBOY: When you split up, were you the one who was in shock?

SUTHERLAND: I was a little more surprised than she was. She made the right decision. I spent two years with her because I loved her; she mattered more to me than anything at that time. We met when we were doing *Flatliners;* then *Pretty Woman* came out. It was just this amazing ascent for her. And she very cleverly said, "I don't think this mar-

riage is the right thing." It was brave of her, knowing the expectations people had for that wedding.

PLAYBOY: How dramatic was this breakup? Was there screaming, crying, broken pottery...?

SUTHERLAND: No, it was over really quick.

PLAYBOY: Did you resent it?

SUTHERLAND: I don't know about "resent." We were both kind of hurt. I was sad. I'm not the easiest person to be with, and it made me look at myself that way, which no one ever really wants to do.

PLAYBOY: She doesn't seem like the easiest person to be with, if you look at her life since then.

SUTHERLAND: During the time we had together, I'd have to say she was. She was one of the funniest people I've ever known—but I don't know her now. We don't talk. Our lives have gone different ways. But then, I thought she was the bee's knees.

PLAYBOY: Do you follow her work?

SUTHERLAND: I thought she was fantastic in *Erin Brockovich*.

PLAYBOY: You married Kelly Winn in 1996. Why marry instead of just living together?

SUTHERLAND: Kelly was who I wanted to be with. I wanted a nice wedding. I bought into that.

PLAYBOY: What's the worst thing you ever did to someone you loved?

SUTHERLAND: Lied. Lied to my mother. In my second marriage, to my wife. She was my best friend, and that hurt her.

PLAYBOY: Did that lie involve your being with another woman?

SUTHERLAND: Yes.

PLAYBOY: Isn't that a kind of inevitable lie that most of us would tell because sometimes the truth can be more painful?

SUTHERLAND: I shouldn't have done it. The lie was that I said I was going to behave a certain way and I didn't. The lie was way at the beginning.

PLAYBOY: You married young both times.

SUTHERLAND: I married when I was 20, and it lasted for a year and a half. I got married again when I was 27, and Kelly and I separated two and a half years ago. Then I had a girlfriend for a year but not another marriage. I've been married only twice. *Only.* How stupid is that?

PLAYBOY: Are you embarrassed about that?

SUTHERLAND: Yes.

PLAYBOY: What have you learned?

SUTHERLAND: You have to be a little smarter going into it. I can understand making a poor choice about what you want to do with your entire life at the age of 20, but the second time, I screwed that up. We're still really good friends. I raised Kelly's two sons with her.

PLAYBOY: What's your take on marriage now?

SUTHERLAND: Marriage is not something I want to do again. I took a couple of swings at it and struck out. I'm done.

PLAYBOY: Is that why you took cooking lessons?

EXPERIMENTS IN REAL TIME

Running a movie or a TV show by the clock isn't new—or easy

Rope (1948) Alfred Hitchcock's attempt to show 80 minutes in one continuous shot presents two smug Manhattan roommates who strangle a prep school classmate, stuff his corpse into a trunk and then host a dinner party for his friends and family.
Drawback: Hitchcock disguises the reel changes with such cheesy tricks as zooming in on a character's jacket.
Final word: It's nifty, but we prefer Hitchcock's *Psycho* shower scene or the crop-duster chase in *North by Northwest*.

High Noon (1952) Old West lawman Gary Cooper just wants a quiet life with Grace Kelly. Instead he faces a band of sleazebuckets in a showdown. The action starts at 10:40 A.M. and goes to noon—the classic film's final 80 minutes.
Drawback: Those endless reprises of "Do Not Forsake Me, Oh My Darlin'" make time seem to stand still.
Final word: If those ticking clocks seem old-school, it's only because so many lesser movies have ripped them off.

Nick of Time (1995) This tepid thriller features Johnny Depp as a Joe Average picked on by evildoers who kidnap his daughter, shove a gun into his hand and give him 75 minutes to kill the governor of California or lose his child forever.
Drawback: Many clocks are shown for 90 preposterous minutes. But nothing really cool could happen until the last 10 minutes, right? Except nothing does.
Final word: No wonder it's the movie Depp never talks about.

24 (2001) In the space of 24 hours—or 24 episodes a season—counterterrorism ace Jack Bauer races the clock; so far he's dealt with everything from assassination threats, nuclear bombs and creepy viruses to a murdered wife and the disappearance of his nubile teenage daughter.
Drawback: In reality, driving anywhere in L.A. takes at least 45 minutes; Jack Bauer always makes it in seconds.
Final word: The plots are ingenious, but the show stretches its gimmick to the limit.

Watching Ellie (2002) This megaflop NBC sitcom featured Julia Louis-Dreyfus balancing her career with her chaotic personal life while a timer in the corner of the screen ticked off the show's 22 minutes—pausing for commercials, of course.
Drawback: Painful plots about overflowing toilets and yo-yo mood swings made 22 minutes fly by like 22 hours.
Final word: The timer was a distraction, but at least you could cook an egg while you watched. —*Stephen Rebello*

SUTHERLAND: Kelly got me those when I started living on my own. She said, "Trust me, sweetheart, you'd better start to learn how to cook." I went.

PLAYBOY: So now you know how to prepare a meal?

SUTHERLAND: I did drugs when I was 18, before Sarah was born. I liked the ceremony, the ritual of preparing cocaine as much as doing it. I did it for a year, loved it and then stopped. I feel the same way about cooking. It's an amazing time to focus on something else. You work out a lot of stuff for your day. I run dialogue in my head. It's a nice, quiet time.

PLAYBOY: What about dope?

SUTHERLAND: Not anymore. I could never really handle pot. This is a really embarrassing story. My main pot experience was in New York. I had a girlfriend, and she suggested that pot was good for sex. So I went running to Central Park and picked up a dime bag, came back, rolled a joint. We smoked it while watching TV. Before you knew it we were kissing and starting to make love. I got really stoned, and my mind started drifting off somewhere else—thinking about what I had to do the next day, when I had to be at work, wondering what my parents were doing, where my sister was. I thought about everything except sex. At one point I remembered to focus. I was moving very quickly, and I thought, Oh my god, I'm going to kill this person; I'd better come. And I did. I remember specifically that before we started kissing there was a very funny car salesman on the television, riding an elephant. When we ended I felt great and thought my girlfriend was right—this was fantastic. I rolled over, and the car salesman was just waving good-bye. All of this had taken place in the span of a two-minute commercial. I said, "Okay, that's it. Pot's not for me."

PLAYBOY: You actually had a cattle ranch in central California for a while.

SUTHERLAND: I did, but no longer. I had 500 cows; we would birth about 450 calves a year. I had to make a decision: Did I want to raise cattle or be an actor? After about two years of that it was clear what I wanted to do. I would wake up each morning and ask myself, What am I going to find out that I don't know how to do already? I can ride well, handle cattle, castrate a calf—but I had to learn.

PLAYBOY: How did your cowboy phase start?

SUTHERLAND: I'd been roping since I was 20, since *Young Guns*. I had learned enough to be on the cusp of knowing that if I pushed it a little further I could really do it. When I was practicing I would rope everything. I'd sit in my hotel and rope the chair by the desk. I once roped a girl on *The Cowboy Way;* she was bringing coffee to an actor, with a clipboard in her other hand, and I roped both her feet from behind a telephone pole. Before I could let go the knot went down, and she went down. I really didn't mean that. I felt so horrible.

PLAYBOY: How do you compare learning to rope with other things you've done in your life?

SUTHERLAND: I never got to finish school or go to college, and I missed that. I missed the socialization. All of a sudden I'm 25, driving around the country with two funny guys in a truck with three horses—those were my college years.

PLAYBOY: So your ranch is gone. What has replaced it?

SUTHERLAND: I built a recording studio and put everything I had in it. I have a phenomenal vintage guitar collection, more than 50 of them. Some are in the $20,000 range. I buy them for their playability.

PLAYBOY: How many bands have you discovered and produced for your company, Ironworks?

SUTHERLAND: I've never produced a band—I finance them. My partner, Jude Cole, is the producer. He's a musical genius. On our label now we have four bands. We're in the process of making their records.

PLAYBOY: Would you like to become a music mogul?

We had gotten our asses kicked, and the only thing I could say was, "I've got to learn to punch like that." I've always had a very different reaction to such situations.

SUTHERLAND: It was never my intention. For 30 years you had white music rip off and absolutely dominate black music. Now African American urban music dominates everything. I want to try to help maintain a balance. A lot of artists aren't getting fair radio play.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel there's discrimination in the music business?

SUTHERLAND: Always has been. For years the discrimination was completely against black artists. Only recently has that turned. It turned because black artists took it upon themselves to basically do what I'm doing. They said, "Fuck this. I'll sell my stuff in my neighborhood out of the back of my car." And then suddenly big companies start making them offers of $140 million because they were the only thing selling.

PLAYBOY: You currently live in a decidedly edgy part of Los Angeles. Do you ever feel you're in danger?

SUTHERLAND: In my neighborhood the two major gangs are Salvadoran and Ukrainian. I walk my dog at night, and when I go around the block there are these guys who you know are serious gangbangers. I have a border collie—you walk around Brentwood with a dog and kids will run up to it. In my neighborhood kids just freak out and run to their mothers, because everybody's got a pit bull trained to attack. I love that shift. There's a line somewhere between Western and Vermont avenues where dogs become mean.

PLAYBOY: You get around L.A. by subway. Do you get recognized?

SUTHERLAND: Yes, but I've found in any situation—a bar, restaurant, hospital—when someone recognizes you, you go, "How you doing?" The second you do that, they go, "I'm good. How are you?" And you say, "Good, man. Talk to you later."

PLAYBOY: What about the guy who wants to take a swing at you, for bragging rights?

SUTHERLAND: That happens. It depends on my mood. Catch me on a day when I feel I don't need this, and whack!

PLAYBOY: How did you wind up with a piece of broken bottle in your elbow?

SUTHERLAND: I lived in Montana for about six years. I got in a fight with two Army guys. They were kicking my ass, and there was broken glass on the ground where we were rolling around. A couple of years ago I broke my wrist and went to get an X-ray, and they saw something in my elbow. It was glass. The doctor wanted to open my elbow to remove it, but I said, "No, it's fine. Leave it there."

PLAYBOY: Have you gotten into many fights?

SUTHERLAND: A few. A lot when I was young, in school. The first one was because someone made fun of my sister, and I told him not to or I'd hurt him. I was 12, and when I walked away the kid jumped on my back—scared the life out of me. I reached over and grabbed him, got him in a headlock and kneed him. It was out of absolute panic and fear. I fractured his cheekbone. I knew I was in a lot of trouble. I felt sick about what I had done to him. I also could already sense that no one was going to treat me the same in that school—an incredible power had shifted. All of that was going on in my head.

I haven't been in a fight for 10 years. Fifty percent of my fights I've lost. My last one, I was 26, in Toronto. I hurt this guy. He touched my wife in an inappropriate way at the bar without realizing she was my wife. I was playing pool with him, and she was sitting with my brother. I said to him, "You had a bit to drink, I understand, but to save my face could you please apologize to my wife?" "No." So I said, "Dude, please, I'm begging you. You shouldn't have touched her." He said, "She asked me to." I hit him, and he went down, but I didn't stop there. I ended up having to pay for a pool table that he bled all over. An ambulance had to come. I remember crying later that night, and I don't cry a lot. I cried over why I did that to this guy. I've got 180 stitches in my head from fights

(continued on page 147)

THE PEOPLE VS. ROBERT BLAKE

By Miles Corwin

The exclusive inside story of how the LAPD's elite homicide unit built the case for first-degree murder in the death of Bonny Lee Bakley

PART I: CRIME SCENE
Saturday, May 5, 2001

CALLOUT

At 12:30 A.M. Lieutenant Don Hartwell of the Los Angeles Police Department's Homicide Special Unit calls Detective Ron Ito, who groggily reaches for the phone near his bed.

"Good morning," Hartwell says. "We got a callout. The wife of that actor Robert Blake was killed in Studio City. The captain wants us to go out there and take the case."

"Is it a whodunit?"

"I don't know," Hartwell says, "but before you roll out there I want to make sure your plate's clean."

About an hour later they meet in the squad room at the North Hollywood Division station. Ito, who is Japanese American, is about five-foot-nine, compactly built and dressed in a muted green suit, white button-down shirt, red print tie and gleaming black oxfords. His hair is cut military-style, sheared on the sides and longer on top.

Hartwell is dressed in a manner few detectives can afford—a custom-made blue suit of the finest Italian wool, made-to-order creamy white Egyptian cotton shirt and shimmering silk tie. He spends all his vacations in Thailand and buys his clothes from a Bangkok tailor at a fraction of what they would cost in the United States. Hartwell is 59, the oldest man in the unit. Divorced, he lives in an apartment a few blocks from the beach and looks perpetually sunburned.

"The North Hollywood detectives have talked to Blake," Hartwell says. "Now he's in the interview room with his attorney."

"What's he need an attorney for?" Ito asks. "Is he a suspect?"

Detective Chuck Knolls joins Ito and Hartwell in the squad room and greets North Hollywood detective Martin Pinner and his supervisor, Mike Coffey, who were the first to be called out to the crime scene and have just interviewed Blake. Coffey tells them they spoke to Blake for about an hour while investigators questioned some residents

COLLAGE BY SCOTT ANDERSON

while Ito slides in the cassette of Blake's interview with the North Hollywood detectives. The three sprawl on the seats and listen intently.

On the tape Blake sounds like the detective he played in *Baretta,* cursing and infusing his speech with an East Coast tough-guy inflection even though he moved from New Jersey to California when he was five.

• The Nanny

Blackwell, Blake's former assistant.

"Who would want to do anything like this?" Coffey asks Blake.

Blake sighs.

"You know a lot more about her than we do," Coffey says with a hint of impatience.

Blake tells a confusing story about a man from New Jersey named John—Blake does not know his last name—who he says tried to kill Bakley two years ago. "He tried to crash both of them. He said they were going to commit suicide or something." But Blake cannot provide any details.

"Can you fill us in on what happened tonight?" asks Coffey. "What were your activities tonight?"

Blake is silent for about 10 seconds and finally says, "We went to the restaurant. We parked.... And things were going really good. We were talking about bringing Holly—her daughter—out here. And when I sit down, the gun, which I don't always carry—but with her I carry the fuckin' gun...usually I just leave it in a car or leave it at home...I took it out and put it on the seat, under my sweatshirt." Blake says he keeps the gun in a small holster and has owned it since he starred in *Baretta* in the mid-1970s.

"So you had the gun on the seat under your sweatshirt. Then what?" Coffey asks.

"I picked up my sweatshirt to leave. Then we got to the car, and I realized I'd left the gun there. And I was afraid I was going to lose my license or that somebody would find it and it would be a bad scene."

Ito yawns and turns to Whelan and Eguchi. "The gun's an alibi."

BAKLEY'S LAST MOMENTS

The detectives spend the rest of the night listening to Blake's taped statement. In it he details Bonny Lee Bakley's 20-year history of mail fraud and cons, how she bilked lonely men out of small sums of money through seductive personal ads with pornographic photos. Blake says his wife, 44, had made numerous enemies and was fearful and in hiding. Her criminal past is not disputed. One of her friends later describes her to investigators as a "mail-order whore." The detectives finish listening to the tape, then make their way to Blake's car to study the bloodstained passenger seat where Bakley was killed.

"There was no contact wound, so it's hard to figure the scenario," Whelan tells Ito and Eguchi. "If the entry wound was on the right side of her head, how does the casing get in the front seat of the car? Since casings kick out to the right, you'd expect it to be here," he says, pointing to the curb. "But maybe the doctor was wrong. Maybe it was an exit wound."

Detective Chuck Knolls joins them. He points to the passenger-seat headrest. "This is a weird one. Why isn't there any blood here?"

"Another strange thing," Ito says, "is none of the neighbors heard any shots."

"Maybe she was shot somewhere else," Knolls speculates. "Maybe she was tossed in the car and someone drove her here."

More homicide special detectives arrive at the crime scene

• The Arrest

Blake being escorted from his daughter's Hidden Hills home, April 18, 2002.

• The Daughter

Blake and his daughter Delinah at Bakley's funeral.

The crime scene, as shown in photographic evidence at Blake's bail hearing.

and start knocking on doors and interviewing neighbors. Eguchi waits for the Dumpster to be moved so he can sift through the rubble. Knolls drives to St. Joseph's hospital in Burbank to examine Bakley's body before Sunday's autopsy.

In the hospital morgue an orderly opens a stainless steel cold-storage vault, rolls out a gurney and unzips a white body bag. Before examining Bakley's body, Knolls tucks his tie inside his shirt so it will not pick up bloodstains—the reflex of a veteran homicide detective. Bakley is still wearing the cervical collar and blue plastic breathing tube that the paramedics inserted before they transported her to the hospital. Knolls leans over and studies the perfectly round circle on her right shoulder—an obvious entry wound. Her hair is stringy and matted and her face and ears so bloody that Knolls cannot locate the head wound. He shines his flashlight on the right side of her face and finally locates what appears to be an entry wound in front of her earlobe. To be sure, a technician posts Bakley's head X-ray on an illuminated viewing box. Knolls studies the X-ray, frowns and shakes his head. The X-ray reveals that the bullet entered on the left side of Bakley's head—a small white circle—and then exited from the right side—a wider, jagged pattern. Knolls can identify the exit wound on the X-ray because bullets, especially hollow points, mushroom after the initial impact.

Knolls is troubled because this contradicts the findings of the coroner's criminalist. He crouches and studies the wounds from several angles. Finally he sees the problem: The technician has posted the X-ray backward. When he flips it around, the X-ray clearly shows the entry wound on the right side of Bakley's face.

As Knolls drives away from the hospital he flips on his cell phone, calls his wife and asks her to give his son a message: "Robert Blake is ruining my weekend. I'm not going to be able to make the UCLA volleyball game."

Knolls returns to the North Hollywood station and spots Eguchi in the squad room.

"We found the gun," Eguchi says.

Knolls flashes him a skeptical look.

"I'm serious."

"If you're bullshitting me, I'll beat your ass."

The pistol is a Walther P-38 semiautomatic, a German World War II relic. It is slick with oil, so fingerprints are unlikely.

Knolls claps Eguchi on the shoulder. "Good thing we went through that Dumpster."

More detectives have been summoned to the crime scene; they canvass the neighborhood in the harsh glare of a hot May morning and attempt to find witnesses or at least locate someone who heard a gunshot. Because there are so many neighbors and this is such a high-profile case, investigators from both Homicide I and Homicide II are called out.

Detective Robert Bub is preparing to interview the only resident who talked to Blake that night. The man, who is in his mid-30s and wears jeans, a T-shirt and a baseball cap, appears dazed as he leads Bub to the breakfast-room table. He tells the detective he is a film director.

"First thing I'm going to do is have you run through the story for me real quick, as to what you heard," Bub says.

"I was at my back computer, in my bathrobe, and I heard *ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong,* like crazy. Knocking and ringing.... I open the door, and the first thing I hear is"—he imitates Blake's panicked cries—"'You got to help me! You got to help me! She's bloody and she's beaten! Oh my god.'"

The man, reenacting the encounter, says incredulously, "Robert Blake? Robert?"

"'Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's me.'"

The man again imitates Blake's breathless manner: "'She's bloody! She's bloody! My wife is bloody! They beat her up! She's been beaten!'"

"And I'm like, 'Where is she? What do you mean?'"

"He goes, 'She's in the car.'"

The man says he ran to the bedroom and called 911; the dispatcher told him to grab a towel and apply pressure to the wound. He rushed outside to the car, carrying the towel. Blake headed back to the restaurant.

"I found that odd," the man says. "Like, why isn't he going with me to help her?"

The man describes how he tried to stanch the bleeding. "All I see is *(continued on page 137)*

Murder Was on the Menu

Four more dinner dates with death

Umberto's Clam House

The joint: Eatery opened in February 1972 at 129 Mulberry Street by Umberto Robert Ianniello, who saw a need for a late-night seafood restaurant in New York's Little Italy.
The deceased: Joseph "Crazy Joey" Gallo, who was dining with some friends in the wee hours of April 8, 1972 following an all-night birthday blowout. A gunman burst in and ventilated Gallo in short order. Gallo managed to stumble out of the restaurant but died in the street.
Last meal: Scungilli salad, currently $15.50.

Second Avenue Deli

The joint: Kosher diner in New York's East Village. A 10-seat hole-in-the-wall in the 1950s, it now holds 150.
The deceased: Charismatic owner Abe Lebewohl, who was shot three times on March 4, 1996 while taking a $13,000 deposit to the NatWest bank six blocks away.
Last meal: Rendered chicken fat, also known as schmaltz. Used instead of butter in kosher cooking, schmaltz is a cornerstone of *The 2nd Ave Deli Cookbook*, which was published in 1999.

Joe & Mary Italian-American Restaurant

The joint: Modest Italian cafe at 205 Knickerbocker Avenue in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn, owned by Giuseppe "Joe" Turano. It later became Mr. Frank's, then a Chinese place called Kok Kei. It's now a boarded-up shell.
The deceased: Carmine "the Cigar" Galante, head of the Bonanno crime family, who may have been on the verge of becoming *capo di tutti capi*. He was shot on June 12, 1979.
Last meal: Red wine and salad, according to newspaper accounts.

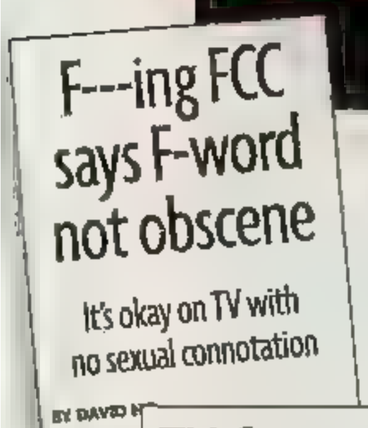
Mezzaluna

The joint: Brentwood, California branch of a chain of restaurants serving northern Italian fare, at 11750 San Vicente Boulevard, near a Starbucks where Ronald Goldman occasionally joined Nicole Brown Simpson. Closed since 1997.
The deceased: Simpson and Goldman, stabbed to death on June 12, 1994 in the front yard of her town house at 875 South Bundy, half a mile from the restaurant.
Last meal: Spinach and pasta, according to Simpson's autopsy. The coroner specified rigatoni; defense attorney Robert Shapiro claimed it was penne.

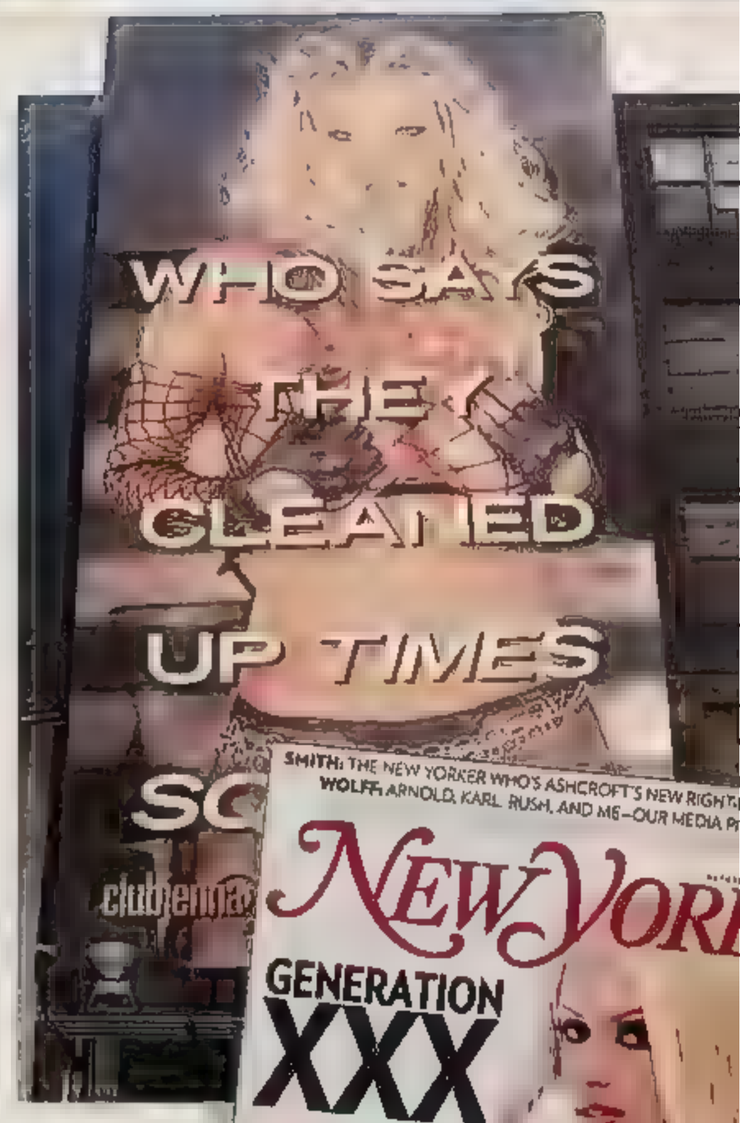
"The Justice Department had some nice things to say about you!"

THE YEA

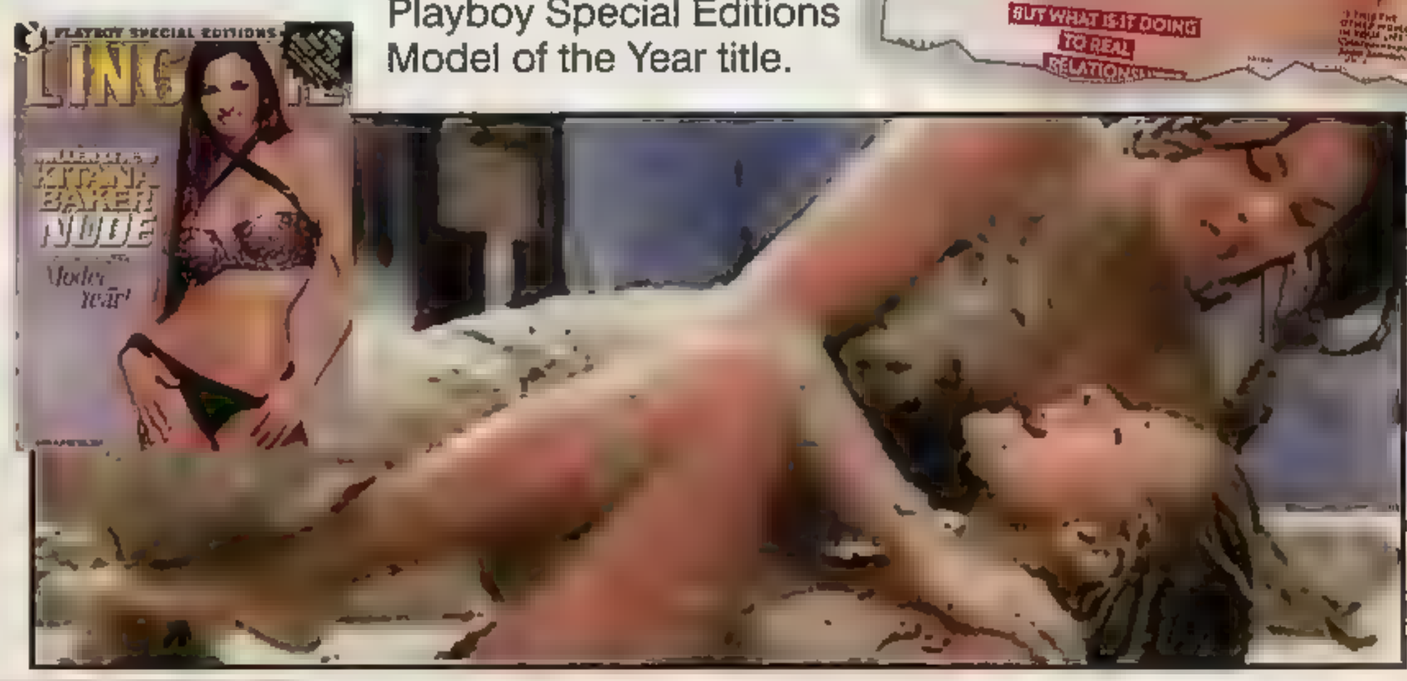
A groping governor, nudity for peace and Bennifer's



BASEBALL, APPLE PIE AND MONEY SHOTS: AMERICA WARMS TO PORN
Not since suburban couples lined up to see *Deep Throat* in 1972 has the mainstream so embraced pornography. When the FCC rules that it's okay to utter the *F* word on TV, you know things are loosening up. Adult-film queen Jenna Jameson sexed up a sanitized Times Square on a five-story billboard and graced a *New York* magazine cover proclaiming porn's ubiquity. It's been 17 years since the end of Traci Lords's XXX career, but fans lined up for her to sign her hump-and-tell autobiography. And when unreformed starlet Mary Carey (bottom left) leaped into California's 135-candidate gubernatorial race, she came in 10th. In one online survey, two thirds of HR professionals said they had found porn on employees' computers. Indeed, the public seems to prefer the real deal: The Fox series *Skin*, which grafted the *Romeo and Juliet* love story onto the world of porn, was canceled because of flaccid ratings. Apparently the plot got in the way of the fun.

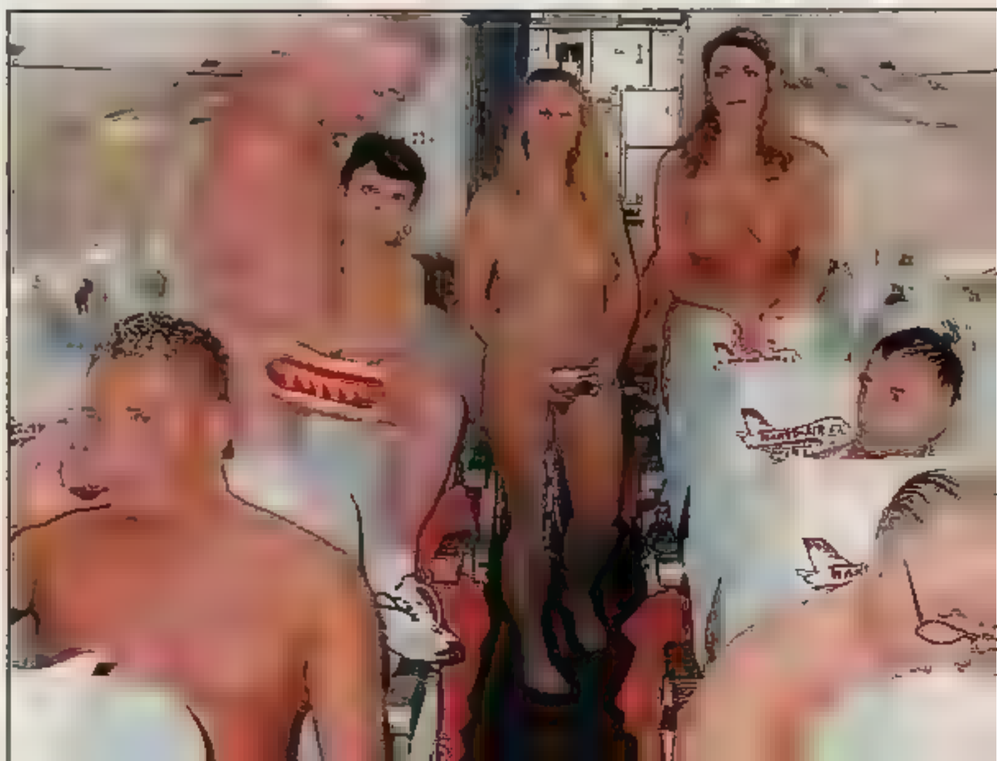


LESS TASTE, MORE THRILLING
And *waaay* more fun than beer ads starring ex-jocks. Miller Lite's catfight caught everyone's attention—and won Kitana Baker a Playboy Special Editions Model of the Year title.



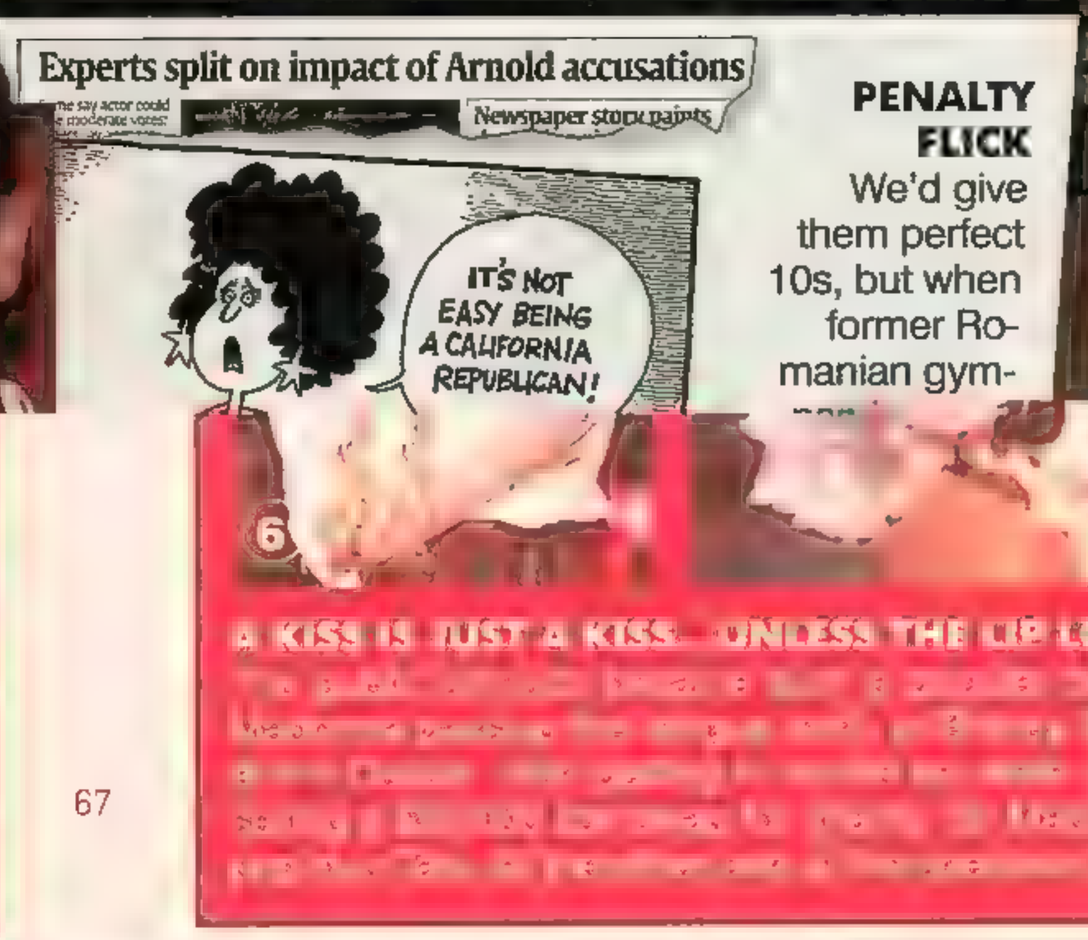
EDIFICE SEX
"It's art!" huffed a rep for the Brussels bank where this Magritte blowup, hiding renovations, sparked more complaints than new accounts.

FREE TO MOON ABOUT THE CABIN
Clients of Houston's Castaways Travel took off—everything—on a "Naked Air" flight from Miami to Cancún. The security check was a breeze.



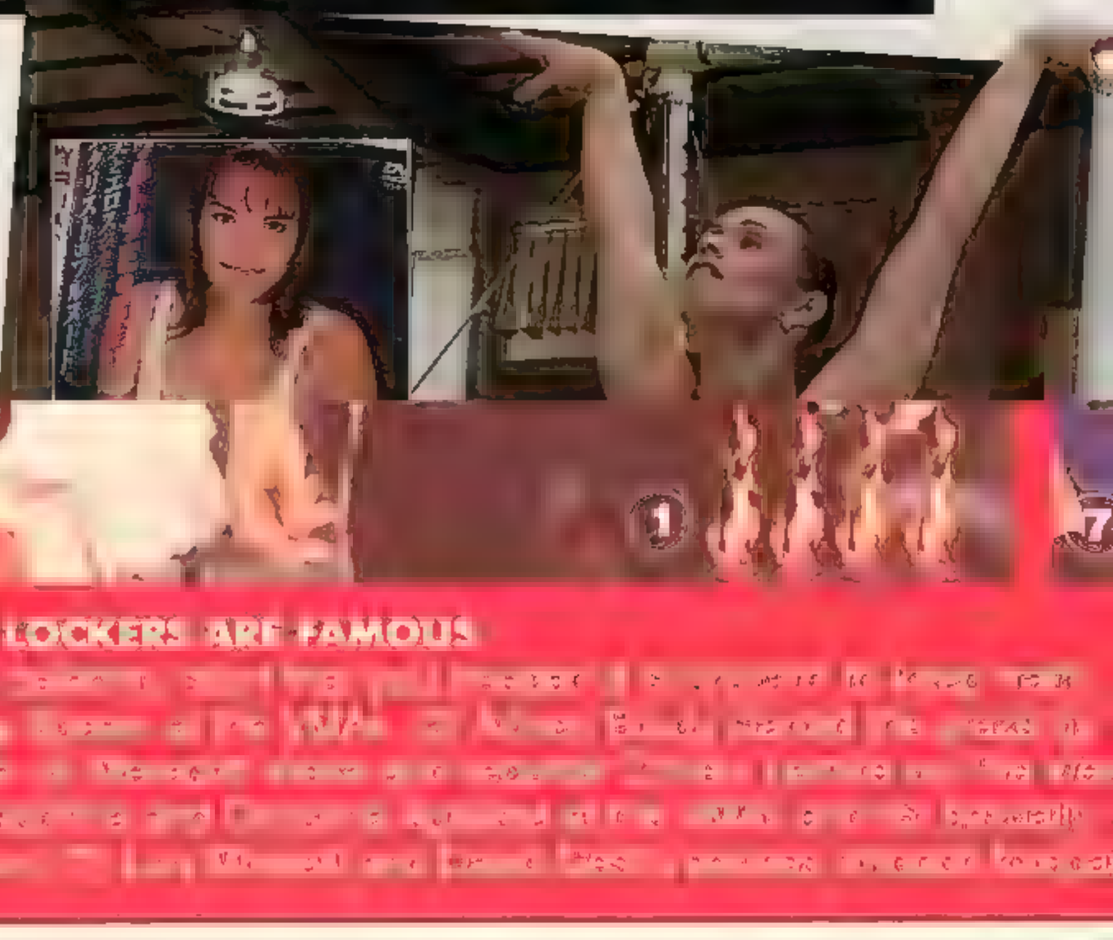
R IN SEX

stripper. Who says there was no good news this year?



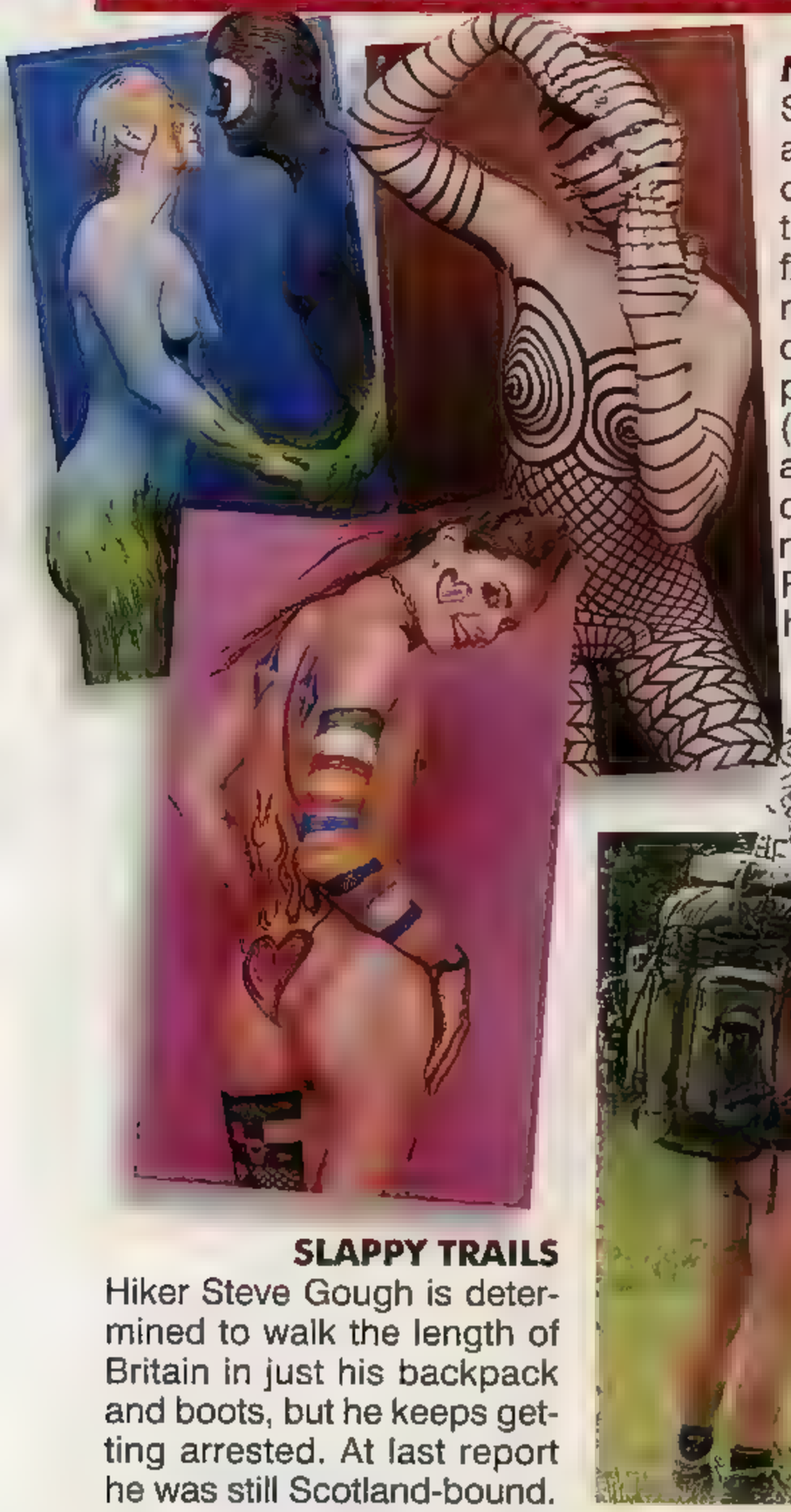
PENALTY FLICK

We'd give them perfect 10s, but when former Romanian gym-



A KISS IS JUST A KISS – UNLESS THE LIP LOCKERS ARE FAMOUS

THE YEAR IN SEX



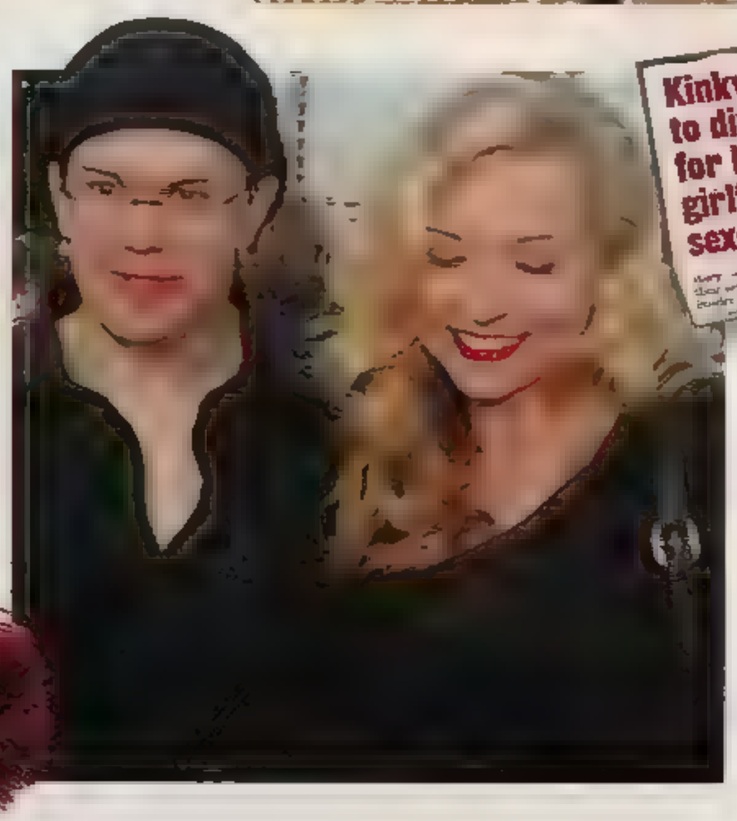
MAC ATTACK
Strip poker, anyone? To combat AIDS, the cosmetics firm MAC recruited 52 celebrities to paint designs (in makeup and tattoo crystals) onto nude models. Result: one hot deck of cards.

SLAPPY TRAILS
Hiker Steve Gough is determined to walk the length of Britain in just his backpack and boots, but he keeps getting arrested. At last report he was still Scotland-bound.

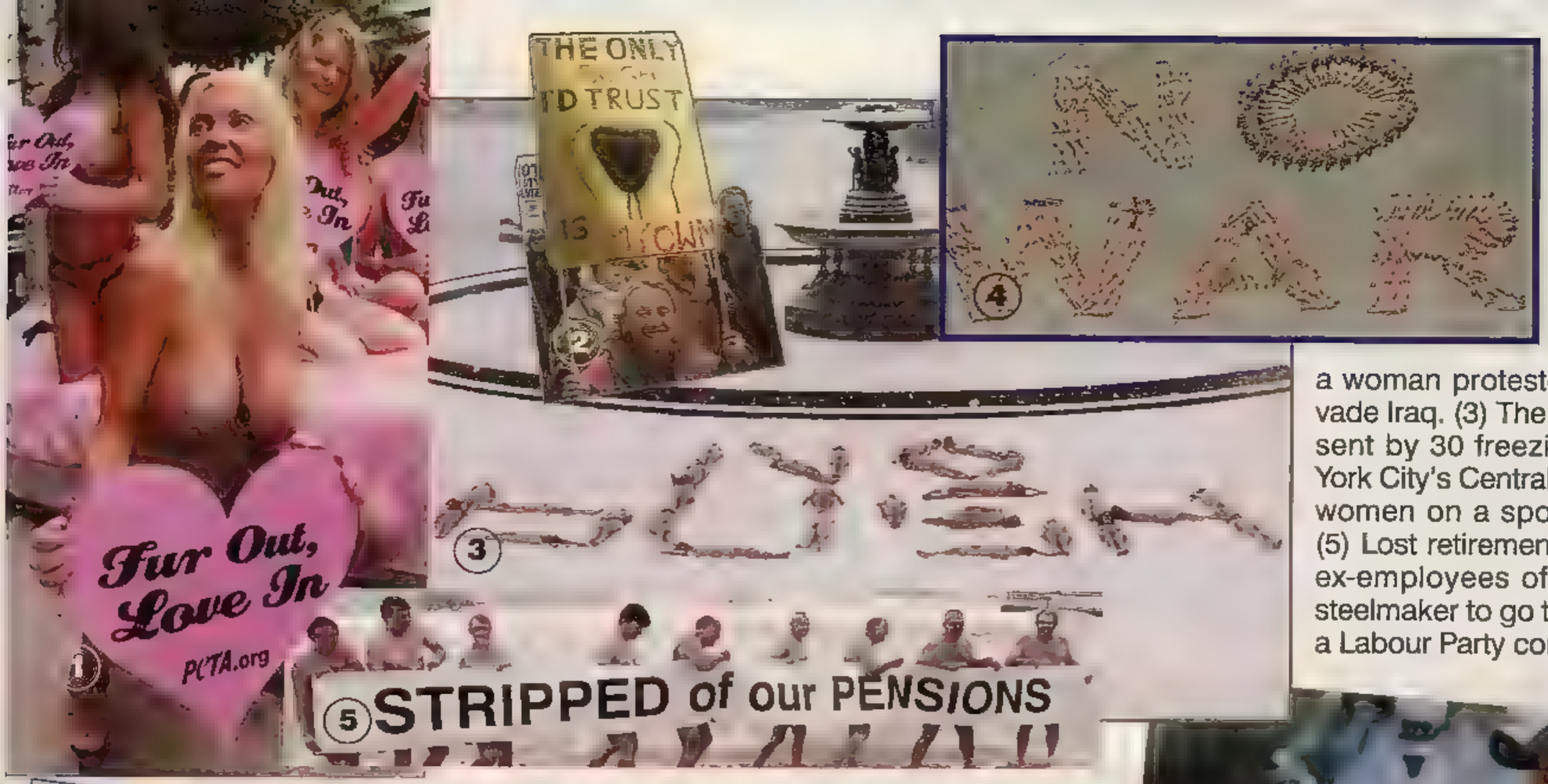
LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE TROPHY GUYS!
Younger fellas enjoying older women: (1) Ashton Kutcher, 25, and Demi Moore, 41; (2) Justin Timberlake, 22, and Cameron Diaz, 31; (3) Adans Lopez Peres, 29, and Monaco's Princess Stephanie, 38; (4) John Corbett, 42, and Bo Derek, 47; (5) Coldplay's Chris Martin, 26, and Gwyneth Paltrow, 31.

THE UNKINDEST CUTS
Utah's Ray Lines runs CleanFlicks, a company that trims DVDs for "family use." As a public service, we hereby restore Halle Berry to her *Swordfish* glory.

HORNY POTTER
Toymaker Mattel recalled its popular Harry Potter buzzing broomstick after parents complained that their daughters spent too much time riding it. Wait till they see the "Chamber of Secrets" magic wand.



WE SAID *MATRIX*, NOT DOMINATRIX!
Pay attention—there will be a quiz: The romance of *Matrix* director Larry Wachowski and dominatrix Karin Winslow (together, left) broke up not only Wachowski's marriage to his high school sweetheart but Winslow's to her husband, who was born female but has undergone sex-change surgery. Now Wachowski wants to switch genders too; he's taking hormone shots. As Neo would no doubt say, "Whoa."



STRIP PLEAS
In a trend we noted last year, activists are still doffing their duds for causes such as (1) PETA's campaign against fur. (2) In London, a woman protested U.S. plans to invade Iraq. (3) The same message was sent by 30 freezing females in New York City's Central Park and (4) by 300 women on a sports field in Sydney. (5) Lost retirement benefits prompted ex-employees of a bankrupt British steelmaker to go the full monty during a Labour Party conference.

OOPS, SHE DID IT FOR THE FIRST TIME
Just in case the Kiss didn't fuel enough male fantasies, 22-year-old pop superstar Britney Spears kept forgetting to wear various articles of clothing in a series of high-profile magazine shoots promoting her latest album. And in the ultimate blow to her former Mouseketeer image, Spears admitted that she'd finally lost her virginity to former flame Justin Timberlake (after he blabbed about it first). So is this budding glamour icon the next Madonna or the next Marilyn Monroe? When you're this hot, why choose? All we know is that both appeared in PLAYBOY.

TIGER WHO?
Stealing golf fans' attention at the U.S. Open, an Internet gambling site put its money where our mouth wants to be.

SPORTSMEN BEHAVING BADLY, PART TWO
No sooner had the marriage of Nascar champ Jeff Gordon hit the wall over his affair with Deanna Merryman (left) than he was linked to model Amanda Church (below).

GAY RIGHTS VS. GAY RITES?
While the Supreme Court tossed out sodomy laws without serious protest, the ordination of gay Episcopal bishop Gene Robinson sparked a worldwide Anglican rift.

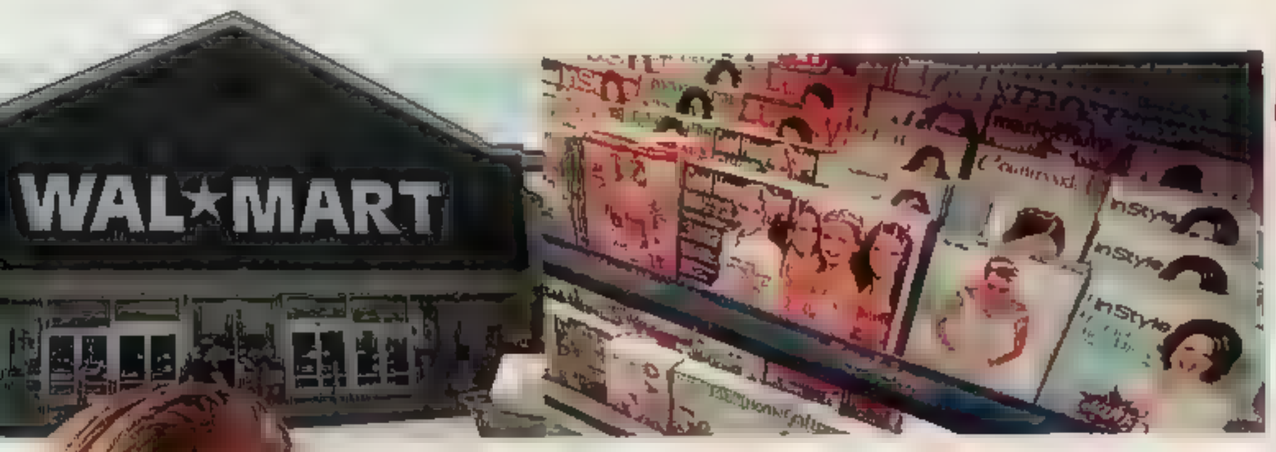
LAST ONE IN THE POOL IS BLIND!
Busby Berkeley would've loved it: Members of Spain's synchronized swimming team posed starkers for *Interviú* magazine.

THE YEAR IN SEX

TRUTH IS WILDER THAN FICTION
As if all the hot-tub antics of reality TV weren't enough, tabloids kept a close watch on contestants' extracurricular dating habits and brushes with the law. PLAYBOY readers, however, caught a bonus look at *Survivor: Amazon*'s Jenna Morasca and Heidi Strobel.

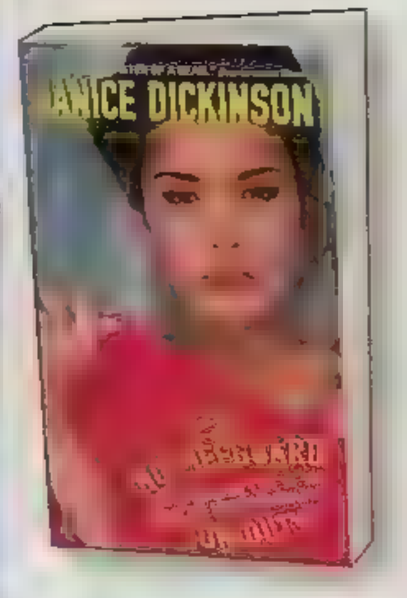
BAD WILL HUNTING
Though Hunting for Bambi, a Vegas business said to charge men $10,000 to stalk naked women with paintball guns, was exposed as a hoax, the creator vowed that he *would* stage the safaris—in New York.

THE PM, HIS WIFE AND HER GURU
British media bayed at Tony Blair when his wife, Cherie (right), dabbled in shady deals with the aid of "spiritual guru" (and ex–topless model) Carole Caplin. Care for a spot of T&A?



SPICE ROLLBACK
Wal-Mart masked the covers of racy women's titles such as *Cosmo* and *Glamour*. But Playboy.com found some Wal-Mart employees, including Tesha Mullen (below), who wanted you to see it all.

TRAIN SPOTTING
NYC spoilsports have busted Spencer Tunick five times for his public nude photography. In October they relented, closing Grand Central Station for this pose.

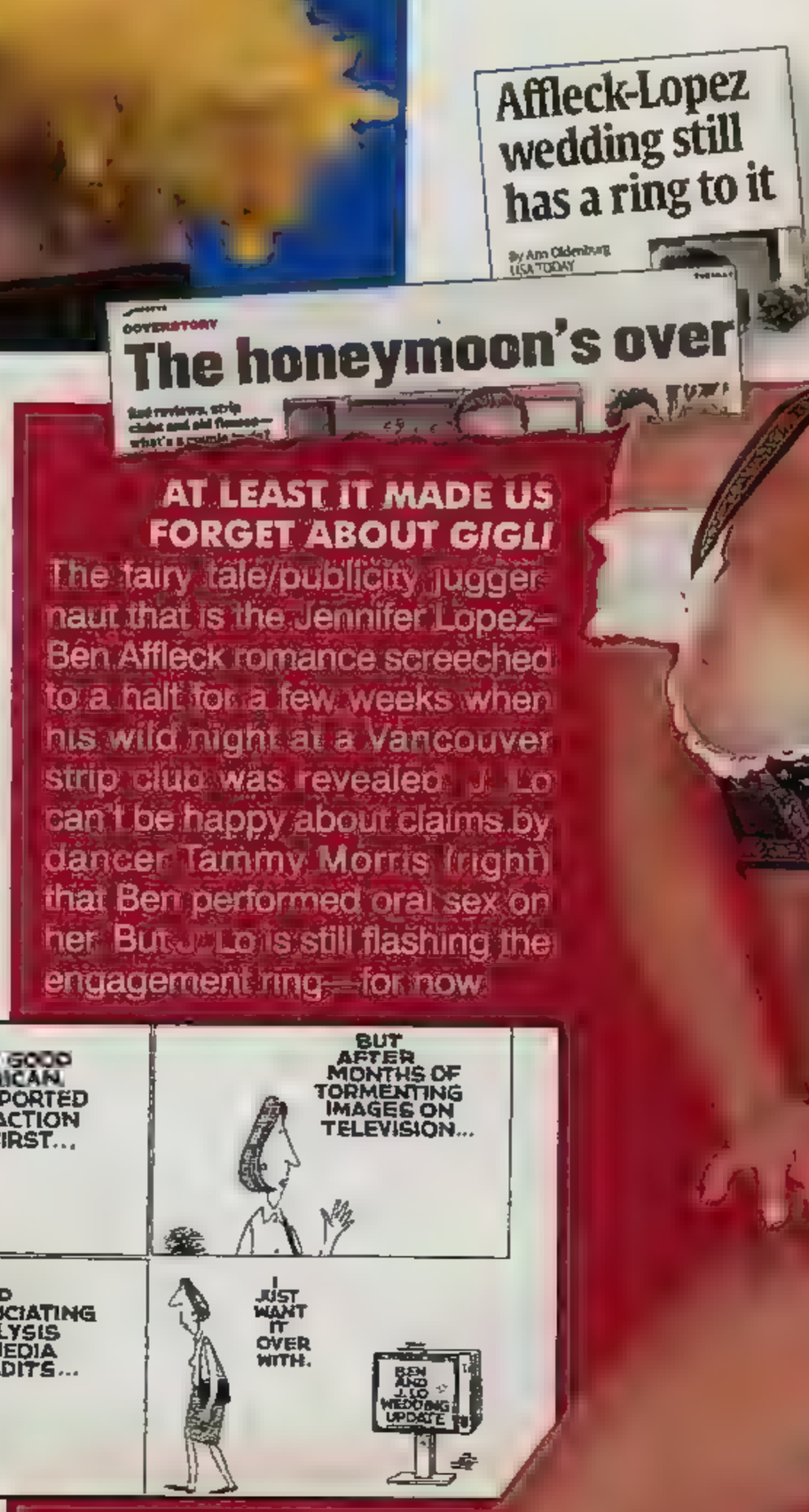


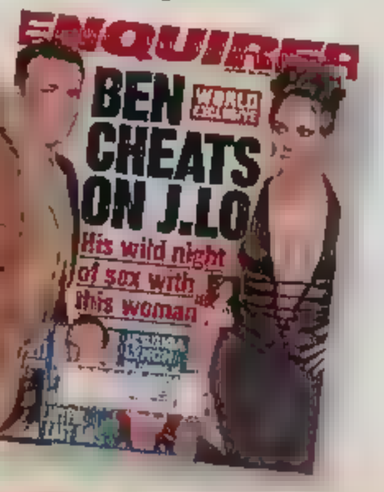
TO ALL THE MEN SHE'S LOVED
In her uninhibited memoir, former model Janice Dickinson spills the beans on the bedroom qualifications of some Hollywood horn dogs, including Liam Neeson, Jack Nicholson, Warren Beatty and Sylvester Stallone (who, she reports, likes to utter "Bam, ham, slam" after sex).

LESS STICK, MORE JOY
Realistic graphics (and horny designers) made video game vixens even bouncier this year. Clockwise from right: Half-vampire Rayne sunk her fangs into Hitler's henchmen in *BloodRayne; Tomb Raider*'s Lara Croft defended her title as the original buxom hero; *Cy Girls*'s Ice and *Backyard Wrestling*'s Kitana popped on the scene—literally.

FOWL PLAY
Louis Vuitton's parties leading up to the America's Cup races are legendary. At the 2003 bash in Auckland all eyes were on the model sporting this egg-cellent bra. No word on whether she got plucked later.

SPORTSMEN BEHAVING BADLY, PART THREE
When Turkish players questioned soccer star David Beckham's sexuality, he blew them a kiss. We would have pointed to hot wife Posh Spice.





AT LEAST IT MADE US FORGET ABOUT *GIGLI*
The fairy tale/publicity juggernaut that is the Jennifer Lopez–Ben Affleck romance screeched to a halt for a few weeks when his wild night at a Vancouver strip club was revealed. J. Lo can't be happy about claims by dancer Tammy Morris (right) that Ben performed oral sex on her. But J. Lo is still flashing the engagement ring—for now.

By Ray Bradbury

We are going to have to examine the whole issue of the future of manned space travel. There is no doubt that the enthusiasm for the whole space effort has waned over the years. Most Americans don't know what we are doing in space."
—*SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN*

Let us consider the history of the world in a few hundred words, starting with the terrible fact that our planet blazed out of the Sun and took several billion years to cool, for the rains to fall, the oceans to form, the lands to arise, for the grass to appear and then for the simple amoebic forms that gradually developed eyes to crawl out onto the land.

Then the reptiles of the world stared at the sky and decided to learn to fly, and the bird was invented.

Very slowly this progression of genetic ideas occurred in the world, and we finally arrived to look at ourselves and be astounded by our creation.

All this we know.

In recent centuries we've voyaged around the world because the kings of various countries said the voyages should occur. The king and queen of Spain sent Christopher Columbus, and then Henry VII became jealous of this and called upon Giovanni Caboto to go forth on a similar venture. Finally Verrazano was sent by Francis I to touch land in the United States and brought his boats up on Kitty Hawk 400 years before the Wright brothers went the other way.

During all of these adventures we were willing to sacrifice minds and lives and knew that they had to be sacrificed for us to go where we wanted to go. It never ends. In recent times we have reached for the Moon, and now we reach for Mars.

Our whole history is one of survival, but survival is not enough. Survival for what? Mere survival is not an excuse. We must turn to ourselves for further answers.

What is it all about? Why will we do this? For what final aim?

In the past months we dreamers stopped staring inward at our war-torn planet, invented two eyes and last June sent them into space. Sometime in January these cameras move in on our red planet, Mars. They will touch down for the first time in years, to stare close-up at the rough terrain, promising us territories where we will build sites for future towns just as the other explorers before us did.

So in January many of us will gather in churches or stand on lawns to watch the sky and to pray for the safe

Sure, space travel is dangerous and expensive. But conquering the solar system is worth dying for

DESTINATION MARS

COLLAGE BY JOHN CRAIG

arrival of these twin cameras. The world's planetariums will be crammed with people hoping for a clearer view of the world.

Why all this?

Because for too many years we have abandoned the Apollo missions' dream. When the first footprint was left on the Moon we promised ourselves to keep moving from that lunar base outward to distant worlds. Since then we have lost ourselves in political warfare and the terrible attrition of death in a dozen nations.

Finally, we have let our dreams beyond Earth be erased by the circumnavigations of the shuttle. Year after year the shuttle has charted our seas and scanned the complexion of Earth's present and past. It has become as familiar as the poles whirling in front of 10,000 barbershops, so we have increasingly stared at our shoes instead of up at the stars.

Elsewhere I have described the position of mankind in the 21st century: too soon from the cave, too far from the stars. We are the in-between generation, having emerged from the genetic wilderness to this position where we look at the universe and are stunned by the revelations we find there.

Late nights, haven't each and all of us thought to ourselves, How did we get here? Where did Earth come from, and how did the people on Earth arrive? We have thousands of religions with 10,000 answers and none of them completely agreeable.

Years ago I took an incredible light-year glance at the cosmos, wallowed in panic and shouted so I could hear over the din of facts from the farsighted astronomers.

"What if there never was a Big Bang?" I heard myself say.

"How's that again?" I gasped.

"What if there was never a Big Bang?" my demon muse repeated. "What if the universe and all its galaxies and hot-fire suns and hot and cold planets were never born and simply always existed?"

"Impossible."

"So is the Big Bang," said my demon muse quietly. "Look up: 10 billion light-years of stars. Look sideways, you'll see the same. How the hell do you find and detonate a Big Bang that immense?"

"You can't," I said.

"You said it," said my demon.

"You mean the universe has been here forever?"

"It's scary stuff. The universe has existed beyond time and eternity, waiting for a final thing."

"What final thing?"

"Us. It lacked one great miraculous item. It was a cosmic theater but with 10 million times a million empty seats. The stars knew not themselves. The moons and planets were born deaf and blind, unhearing, unseeing, unfeeling. The great tomb yards of space were just that: gravestones with no names. The universe collected its genetic phlegm and at last coughed forth——"

"What?"

"An audience. It needed to be seen, heard, sensed, touched. It needed to be recognized and applauded. We are that audience. We, you and I, have been birthed amid the blind, mute, soundless tombstones to stand upright in a rain of senseless light and shout against the dark. Religions? They're false. We are our own real religions. We are our own gods. That's why it's up to us."

"So," I said, "that's what it's all about. Millions of watchful humans birthed as half-formed philosophers who have asked again and again, 'Why are we here? Why are we alive? To what mysterious purpose were we born? Give me a reason for life and living.'"

My muse replied, "What's the use of a universe unseen, a theater of empty worlds? We are here, hallelujah! And again wild hallelujahs to witness it all, to witness and celebrate and explore."

So there you have it. For the past two decades, in a shuttle circling Earth, we have been the dreamers of the dream, and that dream, despite our lagging behind, was of the Moon, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter, Pluto, Alpha Centauri and beyond forever. That's life everlasting. That's true eternal salvation. That's why we must go to Mars. And that's why we can't stop there.

REAL CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Many human interactions with alien life-forms have ended in tragedy

Mork

Galactic origin: Planet Ork
First contact: September 14, 1978, in Colorado
Human accomplice: Mindy stows Mork in the attic of her house and eventually succumbs to his hirsute charms.
Technological wonder: His spacecraft is modeled after the humble egg, complete with crack-open cladding.
Unfortunate end: Mork marries his protector and produces a fully grown man-child, only to have the family chased from Earth by Kelnik, a warring alien.

Uncle Martin

Galactic origin: Mars
First contact: September 29, 1963, in Los Angeles
Human accomplice: Tim O'Hara, a reporter, disguises the alien as his eccentric, slightly disreputable relative.
Technological wonder: Martin's head contains retractable antennae.
Unfortunate end: Martin disappears on September 4, 1966. Reports in the early 1980s suggest he may have found a job teaching at Ridgemont High.

ALF

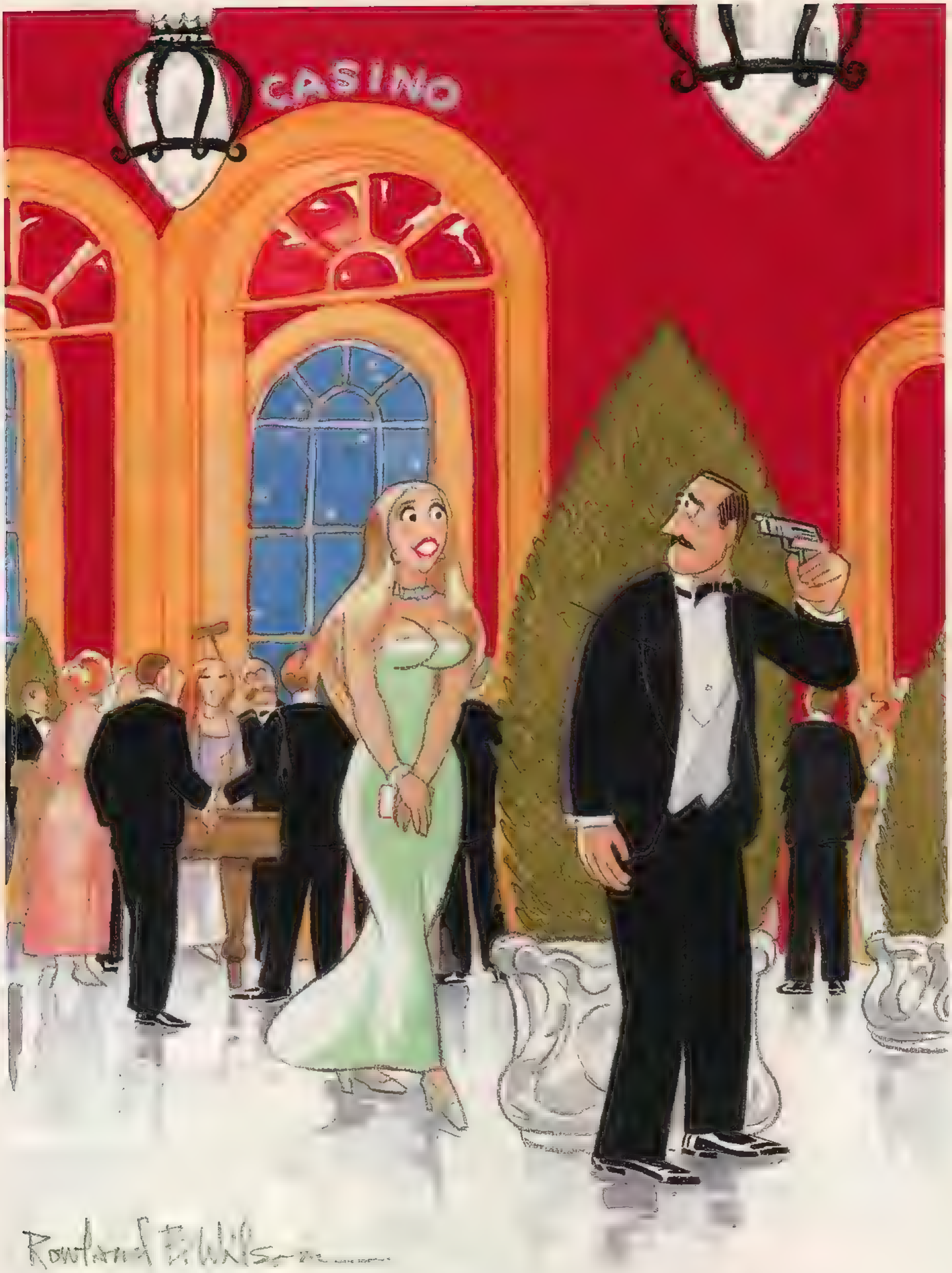
Galactic origin: Planet Melmac
First contact: September 22, 1986, in an unspecified suburban location
Human accomplices: The Tanner family
Technological wonder: A gift for sarcasm
Unfortunate end: Rousted out of his hiding place by the Alien Task Force, he's been on the run since June 18, 1990. In recent years he has been seen making inexpensive long-distance calls with former NFL star Terry Bradshaw.

E.T.

Galactic origin: Unknown
First contact: June 11, 1982, in California
Human accomplice: A young boy named Elliott hides the alien and helps him outrun police, scientists and the FBI.
Technological wonders: E.T. can heal wounds, make bicycles take flight and reduce humanoids to tears.
Unfortunate end: Not as tech-savvy as ALF, E.T. is apparently unaware of how much he could save with cheap long-distance rates in his repeated efforts to phone home.

Kal-El/Superman/Clark Kent

Galactic origin: Planet Krypton
First contact: 1938, in Smallville
Human accomplices: Jonathan and Martha Kent adopt Kal-El—the future Superman—as an infant.
Technological wonders: X-ray vision, ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound, near invulnerability
Unfortunate end: In December 1992, Superman is beaten to death by the villain Doomsday, only to be reanimated a year later. No wonder he sees a supershrink these days.



"Excuse me, I'm new at roulette—I was wondering if you could give me a few tips."

FIGHT OR DIE

JOHNNY TAPIA HAS WON FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP BELTS. HE'S NEVER BEEN KNOCKED OUT. BUT OUTSIDE THE RING HE STRUGGLES TO STAY ALIVE

BY KATHERINE DUNN

It's a clear January afternoon in Golden Valley, Arizona, and Johnny Tapia is in trouble. He sits in a house trailer surrounded by gray-uniformed Mohave County sheriff's deputies. For nearly an hour a deputy has been barking through a loudspeaker, "Come out with your hands in the air." Faces pop up in the windows, but there is no other response. The 35-year-old Tapia—five-time world boxing champion in three different weight divisions and the pride of Albuquerque, New Mexico—waits inside the mobile home with two of his cousins, one of whom is wanted on charges of aggravated assault and armed robbery. The cousin asked Tapia for help, sure of his loyalty. Tapia brought them to this trailer in the desert.

With the deputies giving orders to come out, Tapia phones his wife, Teresa, in Las Vegas. She jumps into a car and drives for the Arizona border. Worried about weapons, the deputies back up an armored truck to the house trailer and hook a towrope to the door handle. They rev the truck and yank open the trailer door. At five P.M. the next order to surrender comes. Within minutes three men emerge one at a time to be handcuffed. A search of the trailer reveals cocaine.

Tapia sits on the running board of the armored truck, his thick fighter's arms cuffed behind him. One cousin is routed back up the dirt road and on to Albuquerque and trial. Tapia is released from custody within hours. Teresa picks him up at the sheriff's office and drives him the 90-odd miles back to Vegas.

"He was talking on the ride back," says Teresa. "He seemed fine."

Back in their elegant Vegas home shortly after midnight, Tapia is in the downstairs bathroom, vomiting. Teresa sees him come into the living room, grab his chest and collapse to the floor, unconscious. As she rushes to his side, her cousin Ruth Montoya grabs the phone to dial 911. The operator notes "possible overdose, taking painkillers, thinking attempted suicide." The comatose Tapia is taken to the hospital, where he is placed on life support. He later admits he had been using cocaine for days.

For the fourth time in his life this gifted boxer and Latino hero is declared dead from a drug overdose. No opponent has been able to stop him in 57 pro bouts. He's never been knocked out in the ring. But his own deliberate escapes from consciousness have been brutally effective. Trainer Freddie Roach visits him in the hospital in Las Vegas and is frightened by what he sees. "He didn't respond, no matter what they did to him," says Roach. "He was like a corpse lying there." The doctors ask Teresa if she wants to pull the plug.

Tapia's future once again has the bleak look that prompts newspapers to update their obituaries. Even if he recovers, it seems he will never box again. While he is hooked to a respirator the hospital is bombarded with so many calls from fans, friends and the media that a special

la vida lo

Tapia information phone line is installed.

After 36 hours he wakes and asks for a cheeseburger. Medical tests show no sign of damage to his brain or heart. After two days he checks himself out of the hospital to go home. Three days later he goes into a drug rehab center. When he completes the standard three-week detox course, he re-ups and stays on. Tapia has been in a dozen rehabs before, often under court orders. This time is different, he says. "I wanted to do it. The other times I was forced to go in." But that last little death was "terrible, terrible," he says. "I've used up my nine lives. Next time it's for good."

In September 2003—nine months after the siege and the coma—Tapia claims nine months of sobriety and moves back to his beloved hometown of Albuquerque. "He's a changed man," says his wife. And on September 26 he returns to the boxing ring in Tingley Coliseum determined to prove it. Tapia doesn't seek out an easy opponent for his comeback. He demands a fierce prospect who will test his ability to become a champion again. He chooses a Mexican fighter almost 10 years his junior, snake-tough Carlos Contreras, who vows to knock out Tapia in front of the hometown crowd.

Tapia's motto, *Mi vida loca*, is tattooed across his belly. His crazy life is a complicated saga. He is a brilliantly disciplined and determined boxer. Over the course of his 15-year professional career he has held five world titles in three different categories: junior bantamweight (115 pounds), bantamweight (118 pounds) and featherweight (126 pounds). Now in the twilight of his career he's a shoo-in for the Boxing Hall of Fame. He's an engaging man, a loving husband and father. But when the drug lust rises in Johnny Tapia, things go bad. Very bad.

Outside the ring his life has been riddled with overdoses and tangles with the law. In recent years he has been diagnosed as bipolar and hospitalized more than once for suicidal depression. Half laughing, he counts on his fingers the drugs his doctors have given him to beat back depression, lifelong hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder: Ritalin when he was a kid, of course, and more recently Wellbutrin, Depakote, lithium and Zoloft. His 125-page collection of police reports fills a three-ring binder in his home office. He's been diving into the dark his whole life. He's staring into the abyss. He says he's kicked drugs and will quit boxing soon. The question he now faces daily: Will these be the final withdrawals that kill him?

COMING HOME

Before a fight most boxers' dressing rooms are quiet and serious places. Only cornermen are allowed—everyone is focused on the coming event. Under the grandstands of Tingley Coliseum, Carlos Contreras's dressing room is like that. But around the corner, Johnny Tapia hosts an open house. Darren Cordova's mariachi blasts from the boom box, and dozens of fun-loving pals sail in and out. Tapia is in constant motion. He smiles as he interrupts his shadowboxing with greetings, hugs and introductions all around: "He saved my life that day!" "We grew up together!" He's eager for friends' family news, reminiscences and jokes—he pushes for this, soaks it up. He's as interested in them as they are in him. "It's always like this," says Teresa.

"I don't want it to be a funeral," says Tapia. "I'm doing what I love. It should be a celebration." His compact body vibrates, bouncing with excitement, yet his white T-shirt shows no sweat. He has a classic fighter's build: skinny legs, big shoulders, wood-solid arms and a round, shaved head on almost no neck, the better to absorb punches without effect. His battered face creases and folds around eyes that are always alert.

The friends come in Italian suits and work denim. They are businessmen, musicians, boxers, old cronies from the neighborhood and probably the old lady who sells him Snickers bars at the mini-mart. Tapia talks to every one of them. They call him Johnny or JT. They bring kids to meet him. One Tapia pal recognizes another as the cop who arrested him, and the two reenact the capture to Johnny's delight.

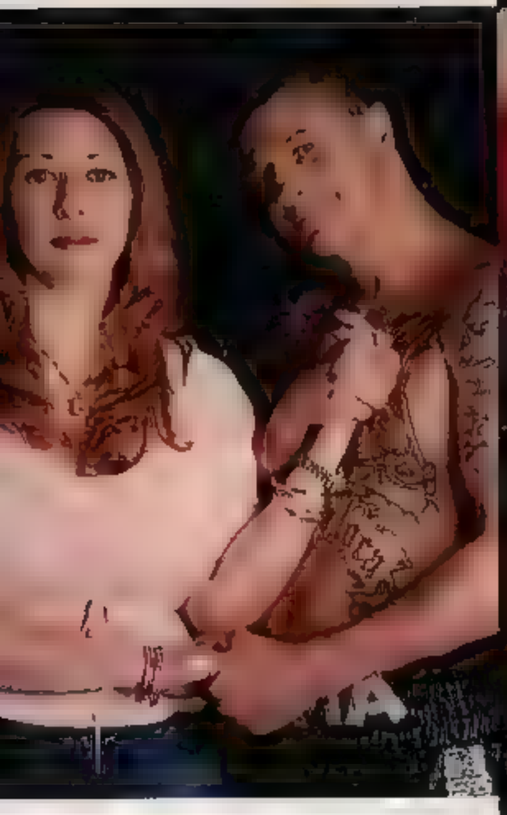
The jammed room is complicated by a video crew, reporters and photographers. An on-camera interviewer catches JT with the question "What do you think about in the last 24 hours before a fight?"

"If it weren't for Darren's music, I'd be thinking all crazy," says Tapia, and then he reaches for Teresa. "I wouldn't be able to do this without my wife. She's my rock. I love her so much."

The women in the room are politely ushered out to the hall for a few minutes so JT can change into black-and-silver trunks that convey a tuxedo dignity. Tapia's hometown rival, Danny Romero, appears, and the two talk like the friends they have become since Tapia trounced Romero and took his title in 1997.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JORG BADURA

This page: After 58 pro bouts in three weight divisions, Tapia wears the marks of a seasoned warrior. In the ring (bottom right, in his fight against Marco Barrera in 2002) he is a formidable opponent who reacts furiously when punched. Opposite page: In his earlier days (far left) Tapia showed a remarkable capacity for rebounding from various scrapes with the law and drugs. Before his September 2003 fight with Carlos Contreras in New Mexico (top), Tapia talks with his wife and manager, Teresa, while stretching. Minutes before entering the ring (bottom center), Tapia kisses his rosary beads. A crowd favorite, Tapia always plays to his fans. He does a backflip (bottom right) to celebrate his WBO junior bantamweight title win over Ivan Alvarez in 1996.



Teresa Tapia is Johnny's wife, best friend and manager. She's the reason Tapia has prospered. "If my wife ever left me, I'd be dead in a month," he says.

IN THE WHITE CORNER

COCAINE HAS KO'D MORE CHAMPIONS THAN ANY OTHER DRUG. A BLOW BY BLOW

Pernell "Sweet Pea" Whitaker

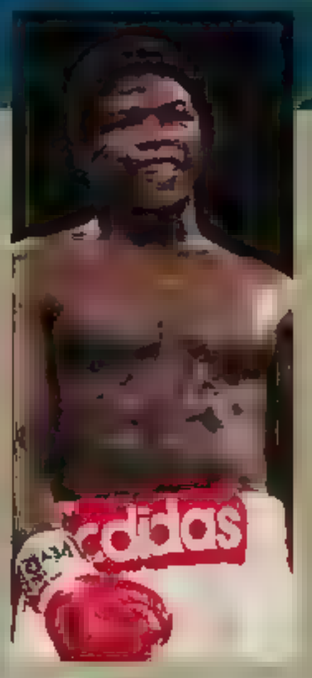
PRIME: The 1984 Olympic gold medalist goes on to win six world titles.
KO'D: After losing a championship fight to Oscar De La Hoya, Whitaker tests positive for cocaine in 1997 and again in 1998; he later has a seizure in his bathroom, reportedly caused by coke abuse. In 2002 he is caught with a bag of cocaine while pleading guilty to a DUI charge in a courtroom. He's currently serving 27 months in a prison rehab.

Oliver "The Atomic Bull" McCall

PRIME: He knocks out Lennox Lewis to become heavyweight champ in 1994.
KO'D: Reportedly a crack smoker since the age of 13, McCall is rumored to be hitting the pipe while training for the Lewis rematch. On fight night he has a nervous breakdown in the ring on live TV and begins sobbing uncontrollably. The ref stops the fight in the fifth. A London *Independent* reporter calls it "a vicious and physical stage of withdrawal from crack."

Aaron "The Hawk" Pryor

PRIME: As the undefeated junior welterweight champion, he beats Alexis Arguello in 1982 in what *The Ring* magazine votes the "Fight of the Decade."
KO'D: When a crack habit spins out of control a year later, Pryor loses his career, his Miami mansion and his fleet of cars. He winds up supporting his habit by shadowboxing for change on the streets of Cincinnati, his hometown—a suicidal fiend weighing 100 pounds (he fought at 140).



"Big" John Tate

PRIME: Called "the next Muhammad Ali," he wins a heavyweight title in 1979.
KO'D: With a $3.5 million bout against the real Ali looming, Tate takes a career nosedive due to cocaine abuse. He ends up panhandling and is later imprisoned after he breaks a man's jaw and robs him of $14. In 1998 he wrecks his truck and dies at 43. According to a medical examiner, Tate had "been using cocaine regularly in the last 24 hours of his life."

Most boxers rest on the day of a fight, but even back at his new house outside Albuquerque Tapia had been edgy. He paced and shadowboxed for hours. The night before, he attended a charity benefit where he auctioned his own sports memorabilia. He's torching what seems like thousands of calories in his prefight party, but a 10-round bout is to come. He's only five-foot-six and 126 pounds, and he's lost 27 pounds in a month to make the contract weight. The skin beneath his religious tattoos is uncharacteristically loose.

Tapia sits still while cut man Ruben Gomez wraps his hands. Engineered layers of tape and gauze transform his fists into blunt instruments, but Tapia chews a plastic drinking straw and keeps an eye on the room, swapping cracks with the watchers.

The stillness comes over him as Gomez paints Tapia's scarred forehead with a clear mixture intended to protect him from cuts. His opponent is known to head-butt. Tapia closes his eyes for this process and is silent as the mixture dries. The party is over. The glad host is gone; his attention turns inward. As if some signal has sounded, the crowd thins to its essentials.

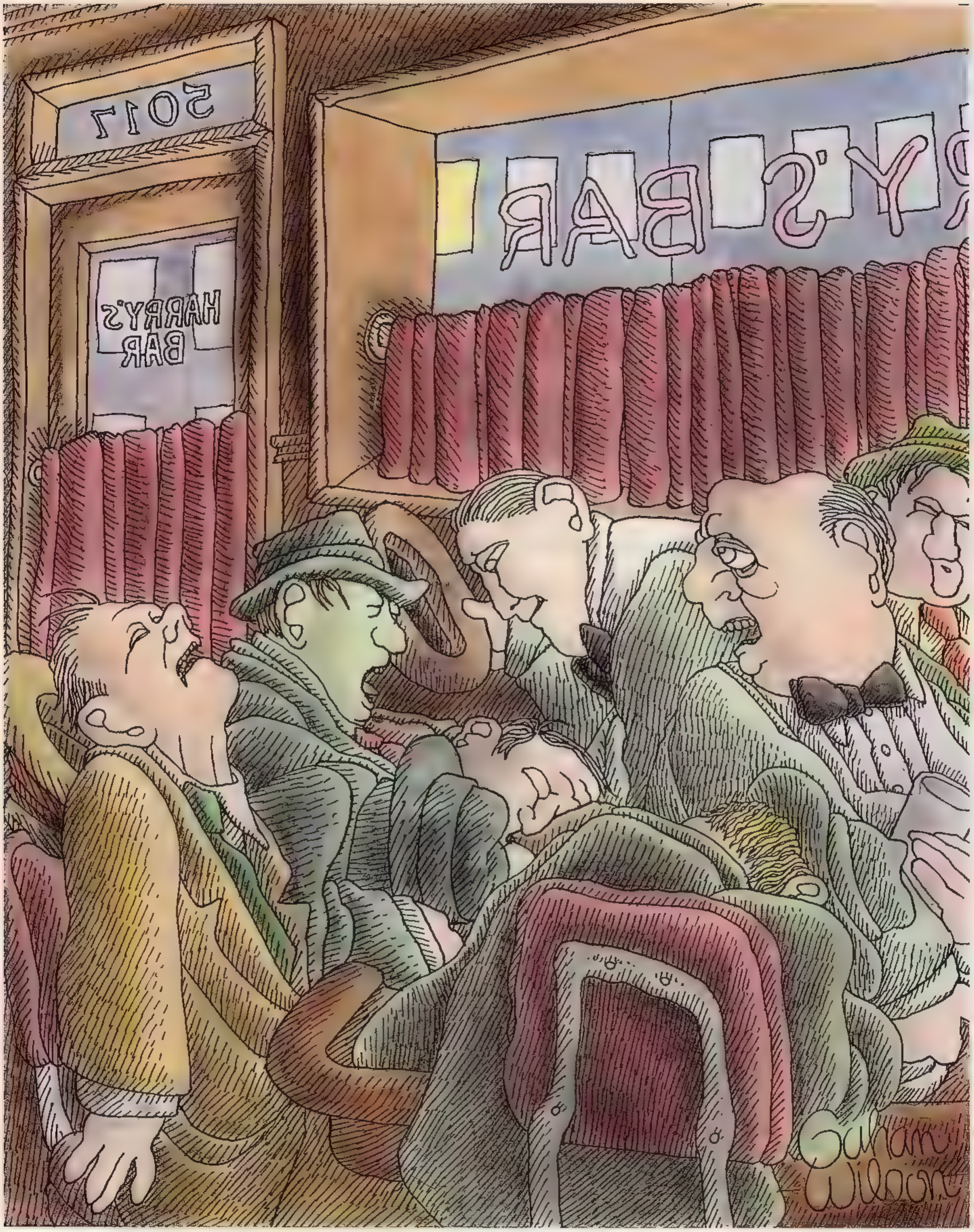
After prayers and a blessing from a silver-haired priest, Tapia turns his back on the room and begins intense warm-up exercises and stretches. This is Tapia the fighter, concentrated, crossing himself repeatedly. Tucked into his trunks is a gold medal of St. Ignatius Loyola, the warrior, a gift from the priest. Trainer Eddie Mustapha Muhammad tapes red leather gloves onto Tapia's fists, and then he holds mitts for the fighter to punch as he practices his machine-gun combinations. Tapia stretches his face and jaw, grimacing fiercely. He catches himself glaring into a camera and apologizes to the photographer. "I'm not looking at you mean or nothing," he says.

Tale of the tape: A battered but relieved Tapia talks to the media after his 10-round battle with Mexican Carlos Contreras last September.

Then it's time. "I need my robe! Where's my rosary? Father, I need a prayer." The priest rushes to him. Tapia tugs the hood of his satin robe down over his eyes and jogs out into the hallway. The priest is at his right shoulder, Muhammad at his left. The cornermen and Teresa guard the rear, with media types trailing behind. The noise of the crowd is loud now, and mariachi music blares. As Tapia breaks through the vapor of the smoke machine and into the spotlight, thousands in the arena leap to their feet with a sustained roar. The path to the ring is railed off, and bodies cram the edge. Hands reach for him as he moves past. The ring announcer shouts into the crowd, "Ladies and gentlemen, Johnny *'Mi Vida Loca'* Tapia!"

THE FIGHTER

His voice has that hoarse boxer's squeak that suggests countless punches to the larynx. He's had his nose broken a couple dozen times. Some of the rumpled scars around his eyes come from cuts in the ring. He's had three shoulder surgeries, most recently after his November 2002 *(continued on page 84)*



"Call the organ bank and tell them that we're ready for tonight's pickup!"

VALENTINE'S DAY SEX Quiz

If you wish to avoid a St. Valentine's Day Massacre of your own, you must pretend this bogus holiday is important to you. And you must make sure that your girlfriend pops her cork once all the bubbly's gone. Got what it takes? Take our quiz and find out

V V V

1) During the afternoon on Valentine's Day, you send your girlfriend some flowers at work. The card should begin:

A) "What light through yonder window breaks...."

B) "Don't forget: quarter pound of ground beef, half pound of pasta salad...."

C) "Sorry for the form letter, ladies."

D) "I like men."

---

2) When you arrive to meet her that evening, she greets you with a long, hot kiss and grinds her pelvis against yours. You should:

A) Tell her that you love her.

B) Ask if she's got any pot.

C) Yell, "Something strange is happening to my penis!"

D) Begin sobbing uncontrollably.

4) You take your girlfriend out to dinner, and from where you're sitting you can see the game on the bar TV. What should you do?

A) Ask her to switch seats with you so you won't be distracted.

B) Pretend it's two Canadian teams.

C) Do tequila shots until you can no longer see the television.

D) Tell her you'll take your eyes off the TV if she takes off her top.

---

5) During dinner she says that she wants to "talk about our relationship." You should reply:

A) "You mean so much to me."

B) "I love those moments of comfortable silence we share. Let's enjoy one now."

C) "Stop staring at me, man!"

D) "You bet." Then stuff your face with croutons and point helplessly to your full mouth.

---

6) Back at her place she says she's going to slip into something more comfortable. She comes out naked

and kisses you. You run your hands over her breasts, and she moans. She pulls away and looks deep into your eyes. You should:

A) Take her hand and lead her into the bedroom.

B) Suggest that she floss before you continue any further.

C) Check to make sure you haven't come yet.

D) Say, "Let's do it doggy style so we can both watch *SportsCenter*."

7) A man and a woman often _____ before sexual intercourse.

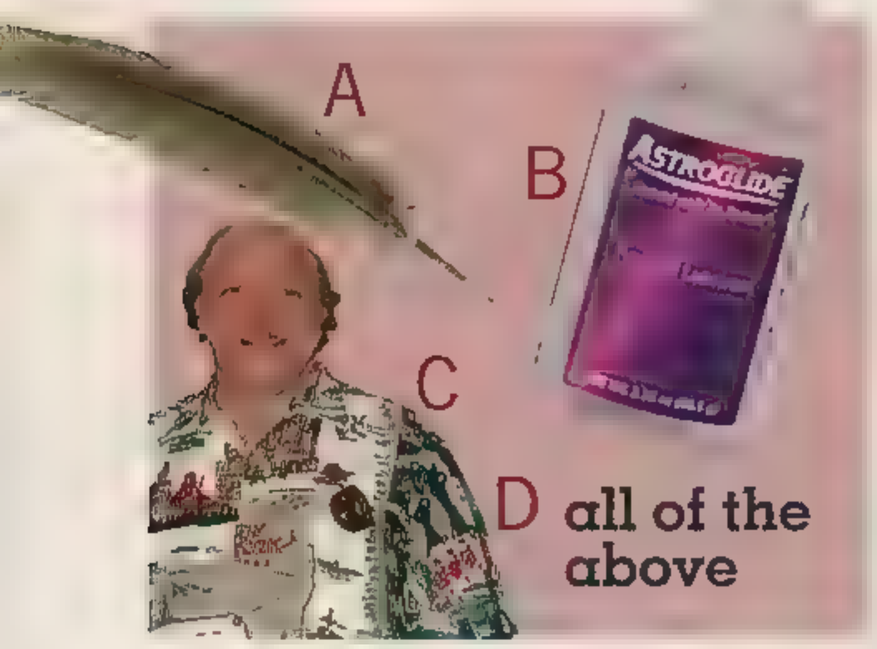
A) engage in foreplay

B) get married

C) beat the crap out of each other

D) dip their genitals in disease-fighting turpentine

8) Which of the following objects might enhance your Valentine's Day sexcapade?



9) During Valentine's Day sex, in the heat of the moment it's perfectly okay to yell out:

A) "I'm in love with you!"

B) "I'm in love with your money!"

C) "This is for you, baby Jesus!"

D) "It's Macy's greatest one-day sale ever!"

10) On Valentine's Day, even more than on other days, you should never put your penis in a woman's _____ without asking her first.

A) spaghetti

B) anus

C) mother

D) all of the above

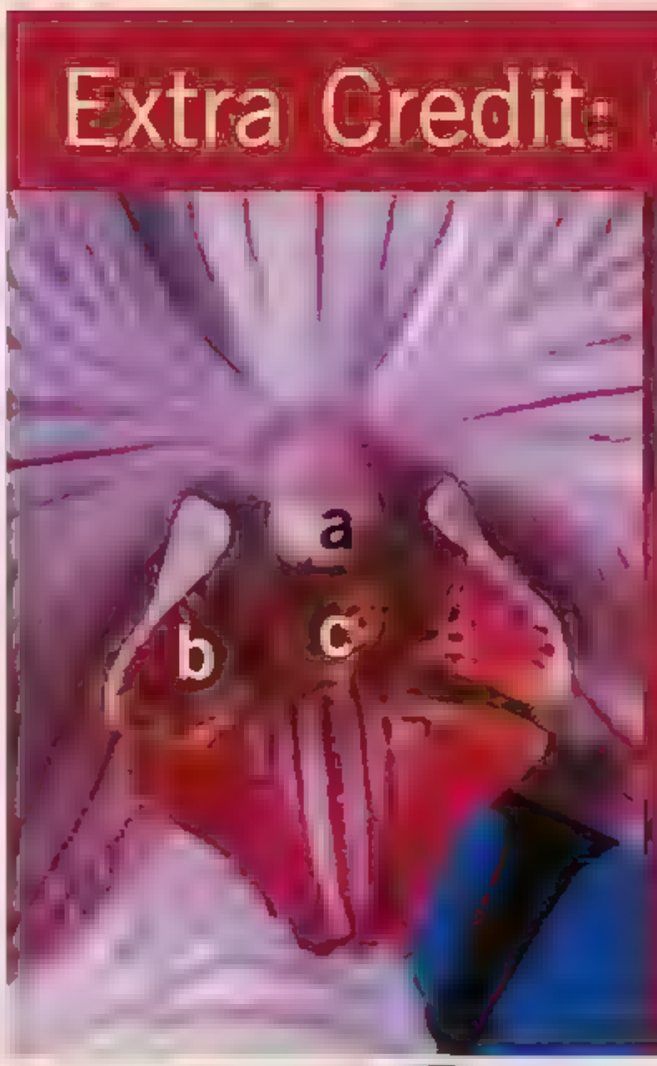
11) A locomotive is pumping through a dark tunnel, and it's about to jump the rails. The train is traveling at 65 mph, and the lone passenger is about to get off. She is yelling, "Keep going! We're almost there!" The chief engineer should immediately:

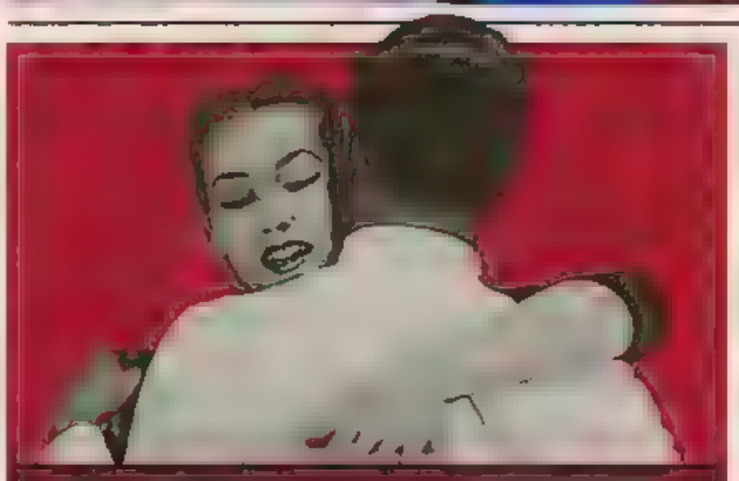
A) Take a cold shower.

B) Consider how Howard Dean's foreign policy could affect the Middle East.

C) Give up and floor it, then make the passenger walk the rest of the way.

D) Make her help out a little, goddamn it.





12] Which one of these pictures shows a woman climaxing?

13) If your date doesn't have an orgasm on Valentine's Day, you'll be hearing about it for the rest of the year. What is the best way to bring a woman to the big O?

A) Apply indirect rhythmic pressure around her clitoris.

B) Bring in the heavy machinery.

C) Tweak her nipples and make honking noises.

D) Put the toilet seat down.

14) You're lying next to your girlfriend, catching your postcoital breath. She runs her finger around your nipple and asks, "What are you thinking about right now?" You should answer:

A) "How radiant you are."

B) "Wild horses with big cocks galloping through fields of heather."

C) "The utter failure of Derridean literary criticism."

D) "Would you ever consider lipo?"

15) After a short rest you're feeling the urge to come out for round two. What the hell, it's Valentine's Day, right? However, your girlfriend is dozing. To get her back in the mood, you should:

A) Snuggle your face against her ear.

B) Go down on her.

C) Groan audibly as you take care of business yourself.

D) Offer to pay her another $300.

Answer key: If you answered anything but A on any of these questions (except numbers 8 and 10, both of which are D), you probably couldn't find a date for Valentine's Day. Our advice? Turn to the sexy lady that never lets you down: five parts gin, one part dry vermouth, chilled and strained into a cocktail glass with a couple of olives.

JOHNNY TAPIA *(continued from page 80)*

When Tapia was eight years old his mother was beaten and stabbed 26 times with a screwdriver.

loss to Marco Antonio Barrera. But his hands, his weapons, have never been injured. He can't tell you what miracle has allowed him to abuse his body so brutally and still come back again and again to world-class condition. "It's just a blessing," he says.

Freddie Roach has worked with many champs. He calls Tapia "the best boxer in the world." Mike Tyson goes further, calling JT one of the greatest fighters ever. Tapia is fast, intensely busy and bewilderingly hard to hit. He has knocked out half his opponents and made life a leather hell for the rest. He has lost only three decisions—two of them debatable. "Tapia's greatest gift is that he's very intelligent," says his old rival Romero. "He'll move you around, interrupt you so he can be faster." But what elevates him in the hearts of fans is his instinct to fire back more and harder after he gets hit. The more you hurt Johnny Tapia, the more fight you get.

He is a gracious sportsman. No trash talk from Tapia. He respects his adversaries, and by the end of the fight he loves them. He hugs opponents at the final bell, chatting eagerly with them and consoling them if they've been stopped. He has nothing but praise for them in postfight interviews. "Anybody who's willing to step into the ring," he says, "deserves respect."

But Tapia is open about his failings. He'll tell the worst to anyone who asks—what he was jailed for, why he was hallucinating, what drugs he ingested. He doesn't brag or apologize; he just states the facts. "There's no use trying to hide what's in the papers anyway," he says. "If they don't like the way I really am, they don't like me."

LA FAMILIA

"He should retire," says boxing writer Lucius Shepard, "but when he does, he'll die. Boxing is all that's keeping him alive." Tapia disagrees. Obviously he exults in boxing—"my natural high," he calls it. But he will tell you flatly what it really is that keeps him alive. "If my wife ever left me," he says, "I'd be dead in a month. Maybe six weeks if I was lucky." His eyes slide sideways, checking Teresa's reaction. She doesn't smile.

After a hurricane decade of marriage, the couple hold hands, whisper and gossip. She goes to training camp with him. She doesn't like to go shopping without him. He has to know where she is and dashes into their home office to check on her two or three times an hour. "Tree!" he calls her, and the house rings with "Tree! I've gotta tell you something" or "Tree, come and see this!" She is his wife and nurse, his business manager and boxing manager. She is also his chief bodyguard. When he slips away from her, it is the worst kind of danger sign.

He thrives in the limelight. She likes to engineer events behind the scenes and watch them unfold. He's a physical dynamo with the reflexes of a mongoose. She lives in mental hyperdrive. "She reads all the time," he says, pointing at the wall of best-selling novels and biographies in the office. He's a TV news freak, eager to talk about Korea or the NBA draft. They both grew up in Spanish-speaking households. She graduated from high school honors classes. He graduated from what one reporter calls "special ed." She says that, in many ways, he's the smartest man she's ever met. "He can walk into a crowded restaurant," says Teresa, "and in one minute tell you who everybody is. People he never met, he can tell you who they are—an undercover cop, a pimp, a drug dealer. A good guy or a jerk. He remembers everybody's name."

Boxing analyst Larry Merchant says Tapia was "a five-to-one underdog to survive his own childhood." He never knew his father, who Tapia believes was murdered before he was born in 1967. He was diagnosed early as hyperactive with attention deficit disorder, but he was a tough kid. At the age of seven he was riding in a bus when it drove off a 100-foot cliff. He was thrown free in the crash but survived, suffering only minor injuries, while the pregnant woman sitting next to him was killed.

When Tapia was eight years old his mother, Virginia, was beaten and stabbed 26 times with a screwdriver. She managed to crawl out of the quarry where she'd been left to die and then collapsed near a streetlight. Tapia says he woke that night and saw his mother, chained in the back of a truck, being hauled away. But when he ran to tell his grandparents, they thought he was dreaming and told him to go back to bed. Tapia's mother spent four days in a coma in the hospital before she died. Her family found her on the second day, when a newspaper article described her as a Jane Doe. Tapia wasn't allowed to visit her, which still grieves him. "I never got to say good-bye," he says. "I never got to say 'I love you.'" The murderer was never caught, and the specter of his mother's death haunts Tapia. Virginia was 32 years old when she died, and her son feels guilty for outliving her, as if every year he lives beyond her is a betrayal.

Tapia won't abide profanity in front of women. "Johnny fired a world-class trainer," his friend Bob Case says, "because the trainer was talking about banging some broad. Johnny doesn't want to hear degrading talk about women because of what happened to his mother."

Virginia's parents adopted eight-year-old Tapia. His grandfather was a former amateur boxer and a city employee. His grandparents had 14 children and also raised 10 of their grandchildren—"in a three-bedroom house," Tapia points out.

The Tapias' old neighborhood in Albuquerque is half a century's worth of small wood and stucco houses packed close on snug lots. Some have chain-link fences and bars on the windows and doors. The general neatness is more a product of elbow grease than of money, and the streets and sidewalks are deserted on any weekday, with adults at work and kids at school. The blue-collar decency belies the daily misery caused by drugs. New Mexico has the highest per capita overdose rate in the nation.

Tapia's life was formed by family, fighting and drugs. He refers to all his grandparents' children and grandchildren as his brothers and sisters. Some are aunts and uncles; some are cousins. One of Tapia's brothers is currently awaiting trial for stabbing another brother to death. In 1992 Tapia was acquitted of charges of intimidating a witness in a cousin's murder case. Counting off names on his fingers, Tapia rattles off a list of those who have served time. "Every one. It's all drugs," he says.

When Tapia was nine his uncles would set him out in the playground to take on all comers ages eight to 15. "If he won," Teresa says, "he'd get the pride of winning and a dollar." If he lost, "I'd get my butt whipped," says Tapia. "It was just one of the challenges I had to overcome to be allowed to hang with the big boys. I had to learn to fight for the family." Bob Case calls it the human equivalent of cockfighting and believes the uncles were betting on him.

He went to the gym to train, then home for more training with his grandfather. He studied videos of fighters he came to admire: Sugar Ray Leonard, Julio Cesar Chavez, Roberto Duran, Salvador Sánchez. "I'd watch some move and then go try it out on the bag. I was training all the time, following in

(continued on page 132)

"Why can't she keep her aces up her sleeve like everyone else?"

LONE WOLF

Miss February is on the prowl

When Aliya Wolf strides into our office for this interview, we can almost hear her amazing cheekbones slicing through the air as she approaches. "I'm half German and half American Indian, so I have very sharp features," she says, almost apologetically. "People assume that I'm very stern, so I go out of my way to smile a lot, because otherwise I look like the Terminator."

Dressed in a fluffy white robe that she wears between photo shoots, the so-not-Arnold-looking 28-year-old Texan tells us she started modeling as a child when her mother entered her in beauty pageants. "She took me out of them when I was six because she saw all the stage moms with kids turning out like little brats," she says. At 19 Aliya returned to modeling and became Miss Houston USA 1994 and a spokesmodel on *Star Search.* She married and lived in New Orleans and Canada before returning to Houston with her now three-year-old daughter, Zahra. "My ex-husband and I are best friends, and Zahra is our number one priority," she says. "I bought a quarter horse named Shasta Suntan for my daughter. When I put Zahra up on the horse, she lies down and wraps her arms around Shasta and kisses and pets her. There's something magical between little girls and horses."

We heard Miss February likes riding things with a little more horsepower, such as her Harley-Davidson motorcycle. "I always rode on the back of my girlfriend's Harley, and all the guys thought she was totally hot, so I bought my own," she says. "I've had my license for about a year. Recently I

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA

Aliya enjoys taking pictures almost as much as we enjoy looking at hers. "I like getting the perfect shot—mostly of people and animals," she says. "You can capture a feeling or a moment that will never be again. It's great to have your photo taken, too, because you get to see yourself the way a photographer sees you. It would be my dream to put together a photography book and actually have it sell."

went to a biker rally in Austin where all types of people on their hot rods and choppers ride down Sixth Street looking cool. The girls take off their clothes. It's really wild. I'm more of a weekend biker—not real hard-core or anything. Most guys I know already have their own bikes, so they're not into getting on the back of mine, but I do take my girlfriends for rides. It's empowering, because so few girls drive Harleys, and I think it's fun to step out of your life for a little while."

When we ask Aliya if she likes badass guys to go with her badass bike, she blushes and bats her eyes innocently. "While I love to go out and have a good time, I also love staying home, doing normal things," she says. "I can't see myself getting serious with a guy who's into the party lifestyle. My fantasy is being with someone with whom everything just comes naturally, someone who is respectful and doesn't try to change me too much. Of course, he also has to be sexy, beautiful, hot and a lot of fun, but those things are a given!" Although Aliya confesses she's had her share of wild nights, she says she has other priorities now. "There's something to be said for having routine in your life—it grounds you," she says. "One thing I'd like to do is go back to school and study law. I don't think it's ever too late to get your degree, because my grandmother just got her doctorate in psychology, and she's 70. They say if you meet God halfway, then he'll do the rest. Whatever I'm meant to do, I hope it's fun and I can enjoy it as long as I can."

"I've always been drawn to the artwork of Native Americans and their philosophy of living in harmony with nature," says Aliya, who is half American Indian. "My friend L. David Eveningthunder is an artist who paints these beautiful themes on feathers. I wear turquoise jewelry all the time and love earth stones, too. Of all the religions I've been exposed to, the Native Americans' feels the most spiritual to me."

MISS FEBRUARY
PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH
Anya Wolf

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Aliya Wolf

BUST: 34 WAIST: 24 HIPS: 35

HEIGHT: 5'7" WEIGHT: 120

BIRTH DATE: 1-17-75 BIRTHPLACE: Stephenville, Texas

AMBITIONS: To enjoy and experience life and achieve balance between career & personal life.

TURN-ONS: People who have positive attitudes, and being kissed on the back of my neck & behind my knee.

TURNOFFS: People who are rude, selfish or overly aggressive, and bad breath.

CITIES I HAVE CALLED HOME: New Orleans, LA; Houston, TX; Calgary, Alberta; Splendora, TX.

IF I HAD MORE TIME, I WOULD: Ride my horse more often, paint, learn to surf & spend more time w/my little girl.

FIVE THINGS NEAR MY BED: Candles, flowers, my favorite photographs of friends & family, my favorite Stiletto heels & lingerie.

MY FAVORITE AUTHOR: Edgar Allan Poe

My best friend & me at age 11.

A picture from my senior year.

Miss Houston USA 1994.

SEE SEXY VIDEO OF MISS FEBRUARY
AT CYBER.PLAYBOY.COM

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

How can you tell that Governor Schwarzenegger still enjoys groping women?

He kisses babies while they're breast-feeding.

A man walking down the street stopped a woman and said, "You look like Helen Brown."

She replied, "Well, you look like shit in black."

THIS MONTH'S MOST FREQUENT SUBMISSION: What do you get when you cross Rush Limbaugh with OxyContin?

An oxymoron.

A woman stood in front of her mirror, naked. She said to her husband, "I'm fat, wrinkled and ugly. It's so depressing. Please say something to make me feel better."

He replied, "Your eyesight is perfect."

A drunk driver and his buddy were driving down the street. The driver said to his friend, "I think we're getting closer to downtown."

The other guy asked, "How can you tell?"

The driver replied, "We're hitting more and more people."

Two gay baseball players were about to have sex when one asked, "Who's on first?"

A man from New Jersey moved to Hawaii and became very ill. He went to doctor after doctor, but no one could help him. Finally he met a doctor who was in town on vacation. After the man explained his symptoms, the doctor said, "Go into an outhouse and put your head over the hole. Breathe in the fumes for 10 minutes."

The man was willing to try anything, so he did as he was told. The next day he saw the doctor and said, "It worked. I feel terrific! What was wrong with me?"

The doctor replied, "You were homesick."

While performing a vasectomy, a doctor slipped and cut off one of his patient's balls. In an attempt to avoid a malpractice suit, he replaced the missing ball with an onion. Several weeks later, the patient returned for a follow-up and said, "I think something's wrong."

"Oh?" the doctor said, acting surprised.

"Every time I piss, my eyes water. When my wife gives me a blow job, she gets heartburn. And every time I pass a hot dog stand, I get a hard-on."

A man told his doctor that his wife hadn't had sex with him in seven months. The physician told the man to bring his wife to the office for a private talk. When the wife arrived, the doctor asked about her libido. "Well, doctor," she replied, "the truth is that I take a cab to work every morning, and the cabbie always asks me, 'So are you going to pay today or what?' We don't have much money, so I always give him an 'or what.' That makes me late for work, and my boss asks me, 'So are we going to dock your salary or what?' I always give him the 'or what.' By the time I get home, I don't feel like having sex anymore."

"Hmm," the doctor said. "I see. So are we going to tell your husband about your problem or what?"

How do you know when a terrorist is depressed?

He doesn't feel like killing himself.

A farmer was plowing his field when he noticed his daughter running into the barn. A few minutes later a farmhand entered the barn. When they didn't emerge, the father became suspicious. He went to see what they were up to. He found the farmhand humped over his daughter. He picked up a shovel and whacked the farmhand in the ass. The farmhand jumped up and ran outside. The father looked at his daughter and said, "I didn't think you had it in you."

She replied, "I didn't until you hit him with the shovel."

Why did the condom fly across the room?

It was pissed off.

Why can't dwarfs please tall women?

Because when they're toes to toes, their nose is in it. And when they're nose to nose, their toes are in it.

BLONDE JOKE OF THE MONTH: Why did the blonde woman's belly button hurt?

Because her blond boyfriend wasn't that smart either.

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, *730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail to jokes@playboy.com. $100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.*

"...And do you, dude, wish to get freaky with the awesome babe who you met in the public restroom this morning?"

PLAY TO WIN

It's only gambling if you lose. Everything you need to know to make money betting on sports—straight from the pros

hree...two...one...! When the final seconds tick off the clock at Super Bowl XXXVIII this month in Houston, the winners will pop their champagne bottles and toast their riches. By winners, we mean the gamblers, players who stand to make far more cash on the game than those guys running around on the field in tight pants. Some $7 billion in wagers will change hands after that final play. That's more than the gross domestic product of Iceland, more than twice the market value of American Airlines, all of it bet on a single game of football.

Come early April, when the buzzer sounds and the new NCAA basketball champs rush the court in a frenzy, another $2.5 billion in bets will change hands. Talk about net gain.

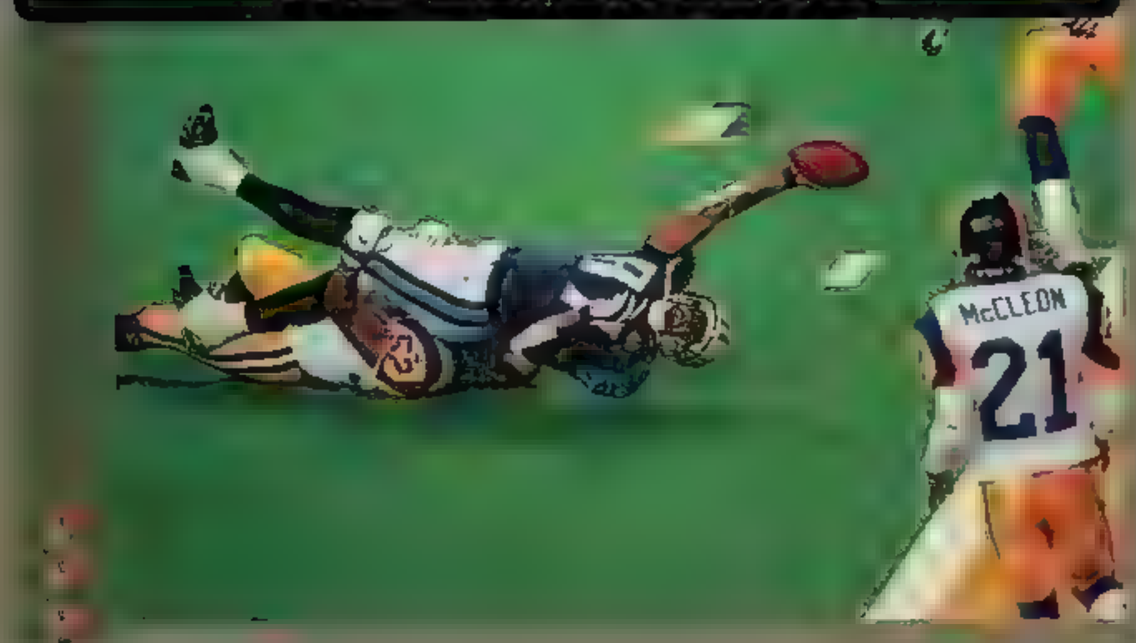
Then there's the Kentucky Derby. And the Belmont Stakes.

These days, with sportsbooks online, you can gamble anytime, anywhere, without breaking the law. The result? Never before have such huge sums of cash been caught in the ebb and flow of victory and defeat. Time to get your cut.

When you step up, keep this in mind: Bookmakers know more about gambling than you ever will. You can bet on it. But if you wager wisely, you won't be competing with bookmakers but with other bettors—most of whom are suckers, guys who throw down cash on the Cowboys because their cheerleaders have big tits. The key to beating suckers? Doing your homework. It all starts here. We hit up some of the foremost high rollers, bookies and oddsmakers for tricks of the trade when it comes to the highest-stakes events of the year—the Super Bowl, March Madness and the spring horse racing season—all of which occur in the next five months. Read on and cash in.

BY ALLEN ST. JOHN

THE SUPER BOWL



It's no coincidence that the world's most hyped game is also the one most wagered on. "I call it the rule of 10," says Robert Walker, chief oddsmaker at the MGM Mirage Sportsbook in Las Vegas, the biggest book in town. "People bet 10 times as much on the Super Bowl as they would on any other game." At press time, we didn't know which teams would face off on the fateful day. It doesn't matter. We suspect you've got the science of football figured out. As for the science of wagering, the bettor, laying $11 to win $10, has to win 52.4 percent of his wagers to break even. If you shift those odds slightly, they'll work in your favor. Keep reading.

Forget the spread "My primary suggestion," says gambling guru and *USA Today* sports analyst Danny Sheridan, "is to ignore the point spread and just pick the winner of the game." He notes that in the 37 Super Bowls played, the winners' record against the spread is 31–3–3. In other words, in 84 percent of all Super Bowls the winning team has also covered the point spread. (The most recent exception: Dallas, a 13-point favorite, beat Pittsburgh 27–17 in 1996.) Still with us? Good. Ditch the spread.

Shop around For any bet (the over-under, the money line—see "The Line," right, for particulars), the emergence of online betting houses means you can hunt for the best lines the way more responsible members of society shop for interest rates. This strategy used to be strictly the province of high rollers, because you had to build and maintain credit with a variety of bookies. Now you can bet like a pro by starting small accounts with a bunch of offshore houses and compare lines with the click of a mouse. The slightest variation could make or break you. "I have one $10 bettor who has six outlets," jokes "Billy," a former illegal bookie who now runs Heritagesports.com in Costa Rica. "The pros are always shopping for bargains."

The bigger payout Going with the favored team? Not a bad investment. The favorite is 20–14–3 against the spread in Super Bowl history. Based on that stat, betting on the favored team will provide better odds than you'll find on Wall Street. If you think the underdog is going to triumph (always the more thrilling bet), put your cash on the money line, which gives you odds instead of a spread. In other words, instead of getting points, you accept the fact that your team is less likely to win, so you score a bigger payout if the dog pulls it off.

The closing line After the second quarter, sportsbooks put up a new line. Basically, they're guessing how the game will end, just as you are. But at halftime their edge is gone. They didn't see anything you didn't see on television, and this new line rarely moves once it opens. There's no time for public opinion to weigh in, for smart money to move the line up or down. If you think the line is skewed, it probably is. "We just throw a number up there and let people fire away," says Walker. If you plan on taking this bet, read ahead on how the two teams might perform down the stretch. (Conditioning problems? A field goal kicker who was spotted drunk at the hotel bar the night before?) Keep in mind that the team leading at halftime has won 32 of 37 Super Bowls.

The over-under bet This is the second most popular football wager behind the spread bet. The oddsmaker guesses the total number of points that will be scored, and you bet whether the actual number will be higher or lower. The over is 19–17 in Super Bowls (there was no over-under line in the first one). Sheridan suggests bucking the trend. When offensive powerhouses meet in the big game, people expect them to score all night, so the over-under line skyrockets. Usually the opposite happens—offensive teams tend to play conservatively. (Oakland scored 21 points last year, and St. Louis scored 17 the year before.) Meanwhile, defensive teams tend to pile on the points. (Tampa Bay scored 48 points last year, and Baltimore scored 34 in 2001 behind quarterback Trent Dilfer, who couldn't even find a starting job the following season.)

Proposition bets Who's going to win the coin toss? Will John Madden dribble on his pants when he hits the urinal at halftime? Who the hell cares? "These are sucker bets," Sheridan says. Novelty bets are aimed at clueless geeks who think the wagers are cute. Since there's no real way to handicap these bets, bookmakers can count on getting relatively even money on both sides, so they don't care how it turns out. They get their 4.5 percent vigorish (the commission). "The only year the betting public won money on a proposition bet was when they bet William 'The Refrigerator' Perry would score a touchdown in the 1986 Super Bowl," says Sheridan. "Perry opened at 12-to-one odds to score, which he did."

The spread. Here Kansas City is a three-point favorite. The Chiefs must win by at least four to pay out. If they win by exactly three, you get your money back.

This number simply means that you must lay $110 to win $100 (or $11 to win $10). This accounts for the bookmaker's vig, or commission.

The Line

		Price			Price
Kansas City	-3	-110	BET	St. Louis	+3	-110
Money Line					
Kansas City		-140	BET	St. Louis		+120
Over-Under					
Over	+41	-110	BET	Under	+41	-110

The money line. Here there is no spread. You're betting on the Chiefs to win outright, laying $140 to make $100. Or you can lay $100 on the Rams to make $120.

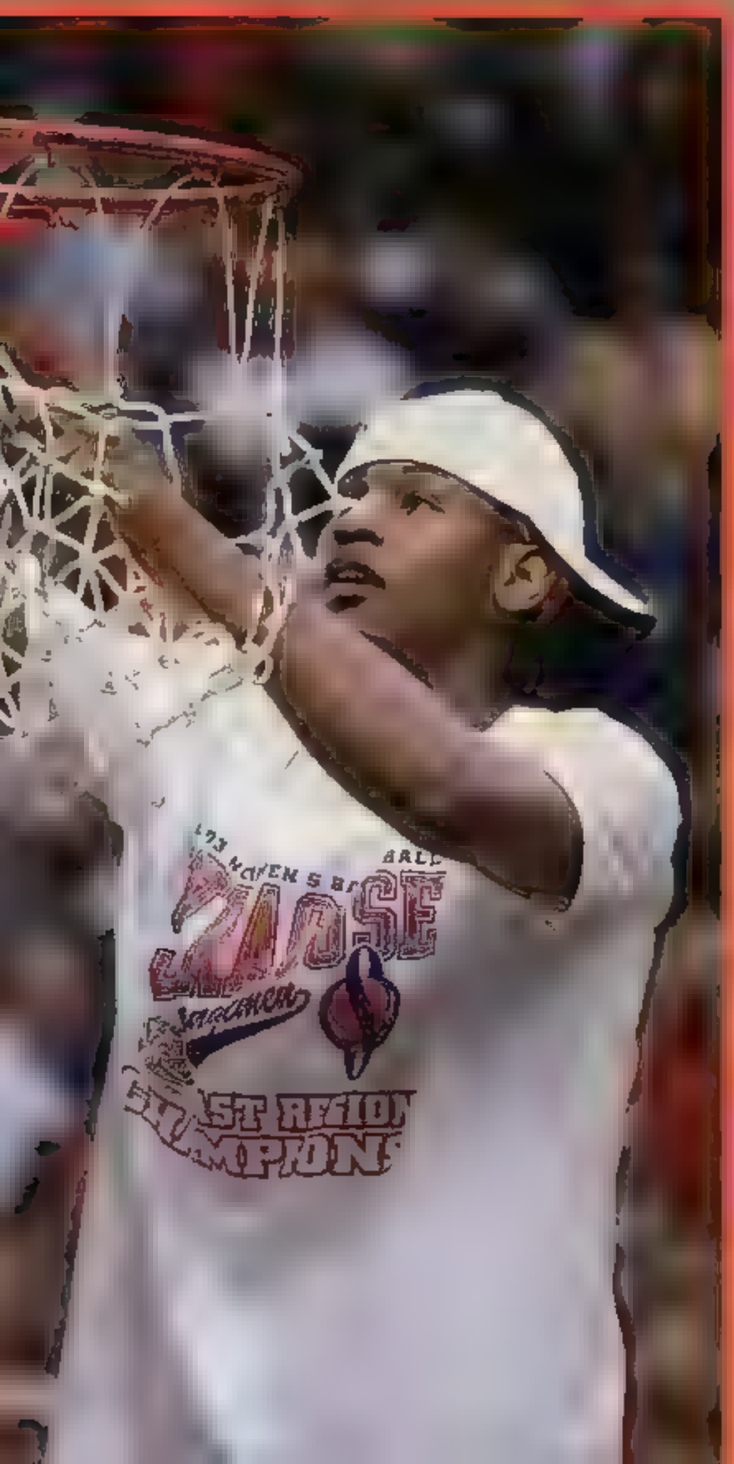
The over-under line. You're betting that the total points scored will be either greater or fewer than 41. You're laying $110 to make $100 if you win.

MARCH MADNESS

When the NCAA tourney comes around, cash and testosterone flood the city of Las Vegas. "Being at the Nevada books during March Madness is more exciting than being at the Super Bowl," contends Walker. The tournament also provides easy-money betting opportunities. If you know the right tricks, profiting is a layup.

Round one: Remember, you're not betting against bookies, you're betting against other bettors. Say Duke's playing Valparaiso. You know that Duke fans nationwide are going to go out and bet their BMWs on the Blue Devils. The spread will soar as a result. "The 32-point underdogs catch those guys off-guard," says Billy of Heritagesports.com. Here's how to take advantage of their gooberhood: In the opening round over the past six years, when the number two seed has played number 15, the favorite has gone 23–1 but only 9–15 against the spread. And when number five has taken on the number 12 seed, the top dog has gone 15–9 but only 8–16 against the spread. Why? When big teams are leading in the early rounds, they let up and take their top shooters off the floor, allowing the losers to narrow the gap. While the clock winds down, you're bankrolling.

The money line: In the second-round game, you should be able to get five-to-one odds with the underdog on the money line against the number two seed in each region. "The two seed will be playing a seven or 10 seed. Those underdogs wouldn't be there if they couldn't knock off a top team," says "Jake," a New Jersey gambler who paid his college tuition by betting on sports. "Every year there's at least one upset." An old trick among pro gamblers: Plop $100 on each of the four underdogs against the number two seed in the second round. If at least one puppy comes in—and that's happened six years in a row—you net $200. If two come in, you're up $800. If three pull upsets—as happened in 1999 and 2000—you're up $1,400. Had you followed this advice for the past six years, you'd have pulled in $3,500. Don't forget to report those earnings to the IRS.



Dog bone: That's not the only reason to bet the underdogs. Those small-market teams are your meal ticket. "There are a lot of weak lines early," admits Walker. "If you follow a particular conference, you might know more about it than we do." Oddsmakers put their money where their mouths are. At the MGM Mirage the limit for pro football bets is $20,000. It's only $2,000 for college hoops.

Seed the field: We covered this point in our section on football, but it becomes even more of a factor with college hoops. "Say you live in Houston and you want to take underdog Texas to whup Kentucky," says Sheridan. "Your local bookie might give you a slim five points, because all the locals are betting on the hometown boys. But in Vegas or offshore you'll get a much better line." By the same logic you should always be wary of betting on the most popular teams. New York teams in any sport, for example, are likely to get less favorable odds because New Yorkers will bet on their teams out of loyalty. Bookmakers need to alter the line to make less popular teams an attractive wager.

Hedge your bet: This requires some math. If you pick any number two seed in the opening round on the money line, you might have to lay, say, four-to-one odds. That's $4 to earn $1 on the favorite. Say you throw down $1,000. At the same time, take the underdog to cover the spread with a $275 bet to win $250 (laying $11 to win $10). There are three possible results: (a) The favorite wins and covers the spread, which means you win $250 on the favorite and lose $275 on the dog, so you lose $25 total; (b) the favorite wins but doesn't cover the spread, so you win *both* bets, a total of $500; (c) the dog wins and you lose it all, which is unlikely to happen given that the two seed is 23–1 in the past six years in the opening round. You're basically risking $25 to win $500.

High Rollers Hall of Fame

The fattest payouts ever at some of the world's largest sportsbooks

$3.25 million

In 2002 a well-known Hollywood agent to the stars bets $1 million at Heritagesports.com that the underdog New England Patriots will cover the spread against the St. Louis Rams in Super Bowl XXXVI, plus he bets another $425,000 on the Patriots to win outright. A little Tom Brady magic and the guy collects on both bets.

$2.7 million

In Super Bowl XXIX in 1995, a man gambles $2.4 million on the San Francisco 49ers to beat the San Diego Chargers on the money line (eight-to-one odds) at the Mirage Hotel Sportsbook in Las Vegas. Six Steve Young touchdown passes later, the Niners take it. *Ka-ching.*

$1 million

In Super Bowl XXXI a gambler at Thegreek.com takes Green Bay to beat New England by more than 13½ points *and* the Patriots to lose by fewer than 14½ points when the line later changes. (Pay attention now: If the Packers win by 14—and *only* if they win by 14—this guy wins both bets.) Green Bay wins by...14 points! Final score: 35–21.

$900,000

A high roller walks into the MGM Hotel in Vegas and bets on the under in the Mike Tyson–Frank Bruno fight in 1989. If Bruno makes it through round six, the bettor loses. *Ding ding!* Tyson knocks down Bruno 14 seconds in, then KOs him in the fifth. ("How dare they challenge me, these boxers with their primitive skills," Tyson barks.) The bettor's payday is roughly a third of what Bruno takes in for getting knocked out.

PLAYING THE PONIES

There's nothing like a night at the track. Beer flowing, horses breathing steam like dragons, drunk guys who haven't been laid in decades hitting on your girlfriend. That said, with offtrack betting online these days, you can play the ponies from your desk at work. Making money off horse racing requires effort. But the payout potential is unreal. One bettor in Tampa won $2.7 million on an $8 bet last October. Can you smell the cash?

Do your homework: "If you're going to bet names or colors, you may as well hand me your money on the way in," says Steve Crist, publisher of the *Daily Racing Form* and a former horse racing writer for *The New York Times*. Without a hint of self-promotion, Crist suggests reading the *Daily Racing Form* (free online at drf.com). You'll need a Ph.D. to figure out the charts and graphs, but once you get the hang of it the site will tell you everything about a horse except the size of his dick (you don't want to know). The stat to look for is the Beyer number, which adjusts times, distances and track conditions so you can compare a horse that's run at Belmont with one that's run at Santa Anita. A horse that posted its best Beyer number in a recent race is a good bet.

Have some patience: Pros don't wager on every race. They bet only when they see opportunity. Unlike betting on football and basketball, in which pro gamblers shoot for a 60 percent success rate, betting on horses is more like strikeout–home run baseball. "You have to be prepared for failure," says Dave Litfin, a Belmont-based handicapper. "You can put the effort in, and two thirds of the time you're going to be wrong." If you play the odds right, that one pick will pay off big.

Bet to win: "Rather than playing the favorites and trying to nurse your winnings up to $63," says Crist, "play some trifectas, giving yourself a chance to win $1,000." (See our glossary, right, for term definitions.) Also, try betting a couple of long shots. In 2002 War Emblem won the Kentucky Derby with 20-to-one odds. In 1999 Charismatic won with 31-to-one odds. If you had tossed $50 on Charismatic, you'd have walked away with $1,550 on that one bet.

Seeing is believing: You can't go into the Tennessee Titans' locker room before a game. But you can check out the horses before they run. When you walk the paddock at the track, says Litfin, "you want to see a sense of controlled energy in a horse. A horse's eyes should look alert. If you see a horse with its neck arched like a chess piece, that's a sign he's confident." You can also do your own injury report. Take a look at the horse's gait. If his rear foot doesn't come to the place where his front foot left a hoofprint, the horse is walking short—a sign that he may be sore or lame.

Don't bet favorites: "The Kentucky Derby is the hardest race to handicap," says Mike Battaglia, the oddsmaker at Churchill Downs. Since 1980 the prerace favorite has won once, and only five favorites have placed. Our advice? Play the people, not the ponies. Between the two of them, trainers D. Wayne Lukas and Bob Baffert have won six of the past nine Derbies. "Their programs have used the Triple Crown as their calling cards," says oddsmaker and analyst Bob Neumeier. Experienced jockeys such as three-time winner Gary Stevens and two-time champs Kent Desormeaux and Jerry Bailey also understand what it takes to get to the winner's circle. If you wager wisely, they'll be taking you with them.

TALKING TRACK

Bolt: To run in the wrong direction. This is not considered a good thing.
Closer: A horse that runs well in the homestretch. Opposite of a fader.
Exacta: A combination bet on two horses to finish 1–2.
Filly: A female horse. Also denotes a hot young lady sitting in the owners' section.
Gelding: A castrated male horse. Examples: Funny Cide, Liberace.
Lasix: A drug given legally to horses to prevent hemorrhaging from the nostrils. It's rumored that jockeys who dig the booger sugar take it as well.
Morning line: Odds set on race day. Also, a booger sugar breakfast.
Nag: A horse that has run a lot and rarely well. Also, your wife when she finds out how much you lost at the track.
Place: To come in second.
Post: Time at which the horses must enter the starting gate. All bets must be laid prior to post.
Shithead: Person placing many bets close to post time, incurring the wrath of those waiting in line behind him.
Show: To come in third.
Silky Sullivan: Extremely fast closer, from the name of a horse that once won a race after trailing by 41 lengths.
Trifecta: A combination bet on three horses to finish 1–2–3.
Triple penetration: Entry into all three Triple Crown races. Also, a sex act that should never involve a horse.

"You know, Jerry…when it comes to foreplay…he's all thumbs!"

Centerfolds On Sex

WHERE TO KISS ME

Teasing is kind of annoying. If he teases me, he'd better be ready to back it up in about five minutes. I would rather just have sex. Of course, in some ways teasing turns me on. I love it when a man kisses my neck. That's my hot spot. I just love having my neck stroked and caressed. I get kind of nervous with sucking, but I love lots of kisses. And if he gives me licks down my back, I love that, too. I get hot really easily when he does that. It's very easy to tell when something is working—I get goose bumps everywhere.

DRESSING FOR EXCESS

I like sexy lingerie—little dresses and teddies. I have drawers full of thigh-highs and garter belts. I used to date a guy who liked it when I wore garters when we went out in public. Even though he couldn't see them, he just loved it. The look on his face was enough to make me put them on just for him. I wear sexy lingerie in the bedroom sometimes—and sometimes it's just a waste of time because he's going to rip everything off me anyway.

TO BUZZ OR NOT TO BUZZ

I may be the weirdest girl in the world because I don't use a vibrator. I think I have one just because a boyfriend bought it for me. It drove him crazy that I didn't own one. He would always say, "You have vibrators, right?" And I'd be like, "No." He'd say, "What do you mean, 'No'?" I was like, "I'm from a little Midwestern town. I was never exposed to any of that." I was shocked when I found out my girlfriends all had vibrators.

Dave Matthews

The jam-band superstar on solos, file sharing and his bathtub built for a crowd

1

PLAYBOY: Why would Dave Matthews of the Dave Matthews Band have to do a solo album?
MATTHEWS: Yeah, I thought about that. It comes back to the idea of the badly named band, the lazy guys who said, "Fuck it, we'll just call it the Dave Matthews Band 'cause you're in the front." We never had the foresight to change it, and I think our fans know that the band really is the five of us and that taking the four letters away from the end of our name does make it a really different thing.

2

PLAYBOY: What was the band's real reaction to the solo album, *Some Devil*?
MATTHEWS: It's not like there was a big discussion. I wanted to put some songs down. Some are very acoustic, some are with other people. I wanted to sit there and go, "What do I do next?" It was like having a day job: Wake up in the morning and go to the studio and mess around and get embarrassed by my own incompetence. I really want people to know how at home I am in this band that I've been a part of for so long. It's good to stick your head out of the water sometimes.

3

PLAYBOY: You're as big a rock star as this country has. Do you ever wish you were more of a celebrity?
MATTHEWS: As I get older, when I walk past a group of teenagers I do start to think, Will they recognize me or am I an old-timer? And they often don't. But I cover myself by saying that if they were 25 and listened to my record, they still might not recognize me. I'm Johnny Boring. I work so fucking hard at being a regular guy—'cause I'm as regular as an orange fiery turd flying out of an elephant's ass. I don't feel regular at all, but I make an effort to be as regular as I can. I don't know why, but it seems important that I don't get a house behind a wall, that I don't insist that my Pepsi be at exactly the right temperature—because I'm really terrified of what a pathetic existence that is.

4

PLAYBOY: So you're scared of fame?
MATTHEWS: It's so pathetic to get that far away from the fact that your shit stinks. It's almost paranoia, not to venture too far from what I think is normal. I'd rather not be too different when I get to the end of this strange ride than I was in the middle of it—which will probably fail miserably. I'll probably say, "Why didn't I wear a pink tuxedo and take it up the crapper from that guy, just to see what it was like?"

5

PLAYBOY: Surely you've gone in for some rock-star indulgences.
MATTHEWS: The bathtub in my house in Virginia is made from three old cast-iron tubs, the ones with the feet. I had the middle of one and the ends of the two others glued together. I always said that if I had the money I'd get a long bathtub here in America. In England they like to lounge in the bath. In France they don't take baths often, but when they do, they like to lounge. But here everyone takes showers because they're so busy. I want a bathtub that, if I ask my wife to climb in, she can get in there with me. It's a hell of a tub.

6

PLAYBOY: You sit at the top of a company—the band, a merchandising company, a ticket agency—that generated more than $85 million last year. Do you run it all?
MATTHEWS: There was a time when our T-shirt operation was in the garage of the management company, next door to the room where the agent was. I knew everyone who packaged the T-shirts and everyone who designed the posters. But it's not that way anymore, and it's not just me involved in that business anymore. It is impressive, but I'm not real involved with a lot of it, except sometimes I say, "I don't like that T-shirt." I hope everyone is being treated well, and I think we're good with the insurance policies. I know we're better than Wal-Mart.

7

PLAYBOY: If you put out some crazy record, the guy printing the posters may not get a Christmas bonus. Does that enter your thinking as an artist?
MATTHEWS: I do wonder if someday I decided to grow a long beard that I could wrap my testicles in and live in a ditch, if I could survive the guilt. Because what I do is subjective, I can only hope that not everybody thinks I suck. Or that not everyone concludes at the same time, "Man, he sucks now," and then people start losing their pensions. So my theory is that I've got to get into a bunch of other shit; we've got to take this machine and diversify.

8

PLAYBOY: Diversify how?
MATTHEWS: Cheese, man—people always like to eat cheese. I might fill the gap that's been created by the lull in the French cheese import market. If there really was justice, there wouldn't be a hole there, but I'll fill it just to keep people from losing their shirts.

9

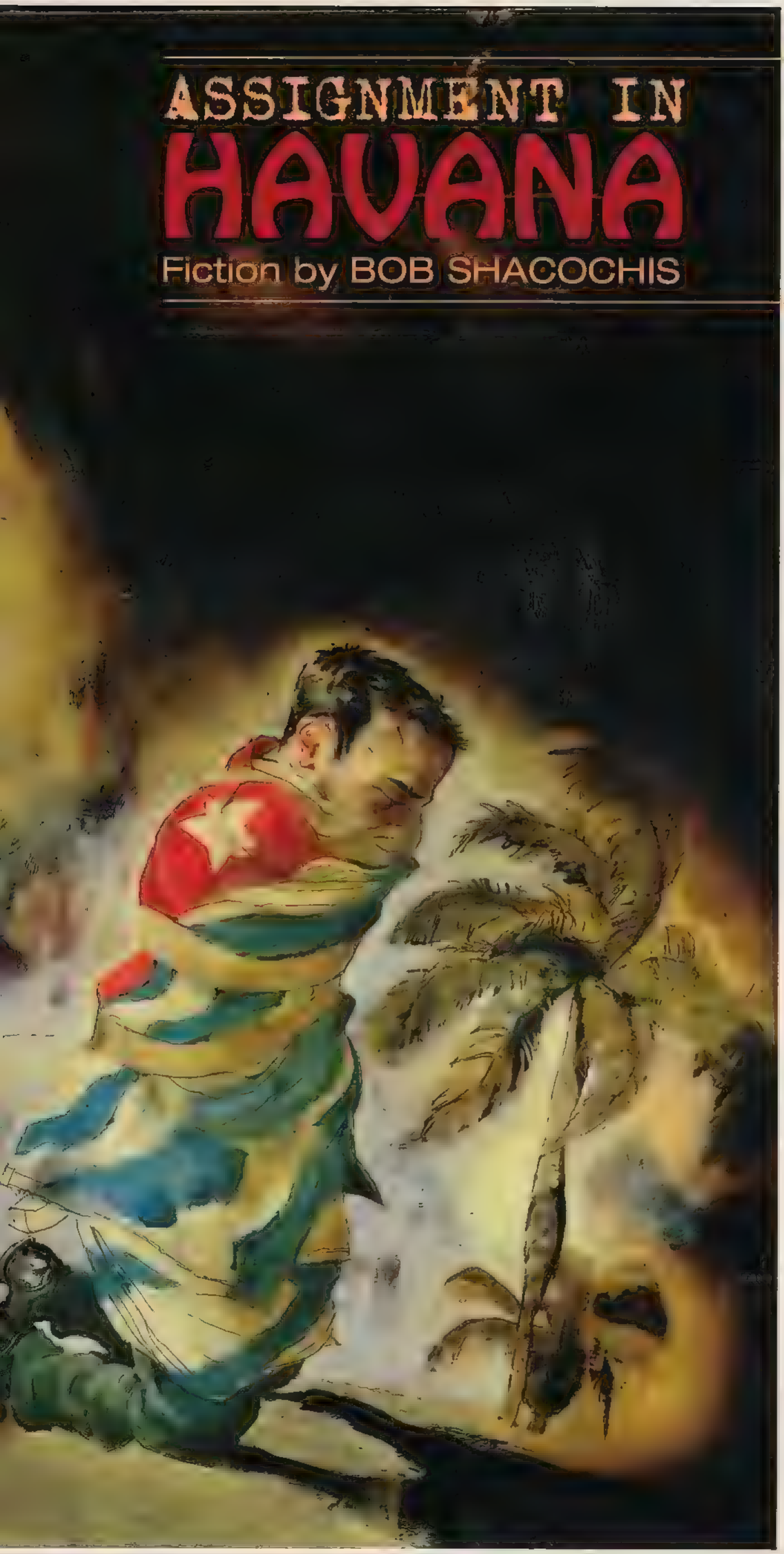
PLAYBOY: Do you listen to hip-hop?
MATTHEWS: I listen to a lot of things. I'm as likely to listen to an old Cat Stevens record as I am to listen to *8 Mile*. But I love both. I think Eminem is just exceptional. He freaks me out, his shit is so good—as a writer, a poet. No matter what his casual exterior is, I can't believe he's not sweating to get that music out. It's so obvious that it's crafted like the finest wine. *(continued on page 145)*

Interview by Alan Light

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ©ALLEN CLARK

ASSIGNMENT IN HAVANA

Fiction by BOB SHACOCHIS



OLD CUBA WAS DYING, AND BELOW THE SURFACE A BIG FISH NEEDED TO BE DISPATCHED. VIOLENTLY

There was a fish in the air, beautiful and almighty, dancing on its tail, the iron-black sword of its bill slashing the Havana skyline. It was May 1991, a hard spring for the Cubans, who were mortified by the loss of the Soviet Union, it too an exalted vision, disappearing into the deep blue abyss of history, unabsolved.

Elliott Payne had never experienced anything quite like this, deep-sea fishing in sight of a city, so near he could clearly make out the cars and bicyclists and the idlers on shore, people strolling aimlessly along the Malecon toward the crossroads of a revolution. How strange. It was a bit counterintuitive, like hunting elk in the suburbs, he thought, a wildness you could engage on your lunch break from the office, trolling a quarter mile offshore and the depth sounder reading a thousand feet. Aboard the *Cerebella,* the lucky men in the midst of this spectacular convergence—a captain and two mates, three fishermen, all yanquis—were transfixed by the missile blast of iridescence, watching the glorious fish sweep across the ridge and down the trough of an indigo wave, its bill parrying the lethal air, imaginary hips performing a violent rumba until it toppled with a great splash and vanished into the sea.

In an instant the slack in the line snapped taut and hummed with menace, seemingly electrified, and the rod bent impossibly down. Everybody watched Dr. William Isaacs—pear-shaped Doc Billy, the angler, who had chosen to fight the marlin standing up—yanked seaward, his doughy knees slamming the gunnel of the stern, and only the quick hands of a mate saved the neurosurgeon from Connecticut from pitching overboard.

Sweet son of a bitch!

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KENT WILLIAMS

Doc Billy, half off the rail, hollering, refusing to give up or let go, relied on his companions to lunge forward and pull him back over the transom, and there went his cap into the water, its visor embroidered in gold stitching—41ST ERNEST HEMINGWAY INTERNATIONAL CLASSIC BILLFISH TOURNAMENT. His head popped up bare and bald like an obscene pink egg, and he huffed and grunted and strained with a degree of exertion you would have thought was well beyond his capacity. The engine rumbled, and the captain backed down on the fish. Up there with him on the bridge, Elliott Payne observed the action, as writers do. In his notebook, under the last sentence he had scribbled—*Much Hemingway spoken here*—he jotted his best guess: *300 lbs.?* Payne was a hybrid of fisherman and hack, a man whose profession it was to catch fish and write about it or, like today and much less preferable, to watch others catch fish and write about that, too. Today Hemingway was on everybody's lips—*El Maestro,* progenitor of the marlin tournament and honorary god in the overpopulated Cuban pantheon of machismo.

"Doc, tip up," coached the captain. "Let him dive."

This was a kill tournament; there would be no cavalier tag and release. The first mate planted a new ball cap on the doctor's head to protect it from the blazing sun. Sweat poured down his inflated cheeks onto his neck and ringed his collar and the waistband of his shorts as he bowed forward and reeled back, bowed and reeled, mechanical and toylike, his pale legs far apart, bracing himself against the power below. After 20 minutes the fish was off the transom, ready to boat, panting as it lay twisted on its side, one fierce eye condemning the world above. Leaning out, the mate extended the gaff and maneuvered for the right mark, the perfect moment, but it seemed to take forever. Then the marlin spit the hook, threw the line into the startled roundness of Doc's face and was gone. The doctor handed the useless rod to the mate, accepting the loss philosophically.

"A brave fish," he declared in fluent Hemingwayese. He unbuckled the plastic fighting belt strapped around his sizable girth, tossed his ball cap aside and retired into the comfort of the boat's swank, air-conditioned salon, dismissing the crew's efforts to console him. Elliott Payne climbed down from his post on the bridge and followed after the doctor to gather the requisite quotes. Doc had sprawled on the salon's couch, the good sport, reflective, storing away the memory.

"Did I have on my red hat or my green one?" he asked the writer. "I'm a very colorful figure."

By midafternoon Doc had boated a sleek white marlin to haul up to the marina's scale with three more respectable whites and a single but smallish blue landed by his teammates on the other boats, yet even as the deckhand cranked the last line onto its reel and the captain opened up the engines, everyone knew the best the Americans could hope for here in Cuba was second place, behind the imperious Mexicans, who had radioed everybody to taunt them with the news of their success. It seemed to Elliott Payne, sipping champagne with the fishermen in the cruiser's salon, asking delicate questions about the strategy and skill required to boat a billfish twice your size, that the *Cerebella* had just begun to plane before the captain throttled down again to approach the channel at the marina's headland, and he was disappointed because he loved this, the roaring slam of the return, coming in from the sea, the sun-cooked feeling of the camaraderie, the mutual gratification of a day spent outdoors that lubricated a stream of stories among shipmates. He loved it as much as the fishing itself, the alternate cycles of boredom and adrenaline, the physical and mental intensity of a fish. Particularly a big fish.

But now, too soon, they were entering the no-wake zone, splitting a flotilla of kayakers headed out, the Cuban Olympic team in training. He wanted to turn the boat around and certainly would have demanded it if he had any inkling whatsoever of what was about to happen onshore.

•

At Marina Hemingway they tied up to the fuel dock, and Elliott Payne stepped ashore through a swarm of journalists from important places, Americans and Europeans and, of course, the Cubans with a TV crew, waiting for permission to come aboard, their eyes rolling with indifference off the sportswriter, nobody they knew or recognized, not competition or at least not worthy competition, neither a proper colleague nor a registered fisherman, a nameless ride-along on the news-breaking *Cerebella,* the first U.S.-registered vessel to enter Cuban waters legally (except for the Mariel boat lift, which didn't count) and the first to fish for marlin since Hemingway's *Pilar* 30 years ago, when *El Maestro* left Cuba for Idaho and the tournament vanished behind a curtain of paranoia and ill will manufactured by uncompromising ideologies. Payne had no use for the correspondents either, although he was keenly aware of the inferiority of his status, his anonymity as a byline and, in most venues, as a person. His job was honorable—not noble, not vital, but not everything had to be—and he knew that. For the past two mornings they had all assembled on the dock in a beggar's queue, pleading to ride along with the good doctor, but as much as Doc liked publicity, he was obsessed and tyrannical about fishing, and the only writer he allowed aboard during the tournament was, however obscure to the public, a fisherman of some reputation like himself. Elliott Payne could feel their meaningless condescension, knew they felt the privilege of fishing with Doc had been wasted on him, a freelancer from an irrelevant trade magazine, but he remained unaffected by his disenfranchisement from their fellowship.

As he walked over to the weigh-in table to check the registry, an attractive young woman in a Cubanacán T-shirt overcame her shyness and handed him a Cuba libre in a plastic cup from the tray she carried—premier Havana Club rum, seven years old, a splash of contraband Coke, one precious ice cube. There sat an official from the tournament at his table, recording individual and *(continued on page 120)*

"I thought you liked reality TV."

HOW THE WEST WAS WORN

NOTHING LOOKS MORE NATURAL ON AN AMERICAN MAN THAN A TOUCH OF COWBOY COOL

There's a new look in town, hoss. The styles of the American West—rugged and practical, comfortable and distinctive, in classic fabrics like denim and leather—have migrated from rustlers to runways. Whether you're a single shooter or part of a posse, we've corralled the best clothes for lassoing ladies. So cowboy up. Below, the backseat bandit is in a jacket by **NYBased** ($195), a shirt by **Union Bay** ($38), jeans by **Blue** ($110) and a hat by **Buffalo Chips** ($125). She's in a suede top ($145) and leather wrap skirt ($795) by **Buffalo Chips** and a belt by **David Jet Black Horse** ($295). Pale Rider is in a suede jacket by **Valentino** ($1,995), a shirt by **Façonnable** ($175) and jeans by **CK Calvin Klein Jeans** ($79). The belt is by **Valentino** ($275), and the jewelry is by **Spall Designs.**

FASHION BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLA MAJOCCHI
PRODUCED BY JENNIFER RYAN JONES

PLAYBOY
FASHION

THIS PAGE: The lone ranger's shirt is by **Tommy Hilfiger** ($60), the tank top is by **2xist** ($16), the jeans are by **Wrangler** ($40), and the boots are by **Skechers** ($155). His belt ($175), buckle ($195), hat ($60) and bracelet ($140) are all by **Buffalo Chips.** His turquoise pendant is by **Spali Designs.** THAT PAGE: Buckle Bob is in a shirt by **D&G** ($175), jeans by **Energie** ($140), a hat by **Stetson** ($70) and boots by **Frye** ($305). His belt ($265), buckle ($775) and bracelet ($160) are all by **Buffalo Chips.** She's in hot pants by **Richmond Denim** ($190), a top ($320) and belt ($230) by **Roberta Scarpa** and boots by **Frye** ($305). Six-Shooter is in a shirt ($129), cords ($149) and belt ($69), all by **Diesel.** His sunglasses are by **Michael Kors** ($198), and his handmade boots ($1,995) and silver bolo tie ($545) are by **Buffalo Chips.**

THAT PAGE: Chief Knockahoma is wearing a cashmere jacket ($3,300), shirt ($470) and pants ($470), all by **Bottega Veneta**. His boots are by **Buffalo Chips** ($750). Pocahottie is in a top by **Buffalo Chips** ($145) and a skirt by **David Jet Black Horse** ($475).
THIS PAGE: Home on the range. Buffalo Bill is wearing a blazer ($1,495), shirt ($475), button-fly pants ($375), snakeskin belt ($335) and snakeskin shoes ($870), all by **Dolce & Gabbana**. The felt cowboy hat is by **Stetson** ($190).

WARNING! RIDE ONLY AT YOUR OWN RISK!

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 148

THIS PAGE: Dances With Wheels is in a blazer by **Perry Ellis** ($170), a snap-front shirt by **Diesel** ($89), cords by **Reunion** ($65), a belt by **Buffalo Chips** ($265) and boots by **Frye** ($165). His shades are by **Stüssy** ($60), and the leather hat is by **Buffalo Chips** ($70). THAT PAGE: Scourge of the West—cow punks! Yosemite Slim is in a blazer ($830), trousers ($285) and shirt ($365), all by **Moschino Uomo.** His boots are by **J.M. Weston** ($750), and his necklace is by **Spali Designs** (price on request). Mae Rest is in a knit dress by **Fendi** (available by special order), a quartz-and-lapis lariat by **Mario Penailillo** ($320) and boots by **Donald J. Pliner** ($700). Chatting Bull is wearing a suit ($1,990), shirt ($820) and shoes ($555), all by **Fendi.**

HAVANA *(continued from page 110)*

"You know the godfather, yes? Everyone knows the godfather. I am offering you a story you can't refuse."

team catches, and behind him, on the arm of what resembled a gallows, the winning fish, a blue marlin—magnificent because it was a blue marlin and not because of its size, which was not immense but modest, its carcass hoisted into the air between two iconic palm trees. A Cubanacán photographer posed dignitaries on each side of the beast to create still more civilizing images to feed the revolution's endless appetite for propaganda. "*Permiso,*" said Elliott Payne, and he leaned over the bookkeeper's shoulder to scan the register, and here was a surprise: The marlin had come from a Cuban boat; a Cuban angler would receive the trophy for Best Individual Fish that evening at the awards ceremony. The homeland had been well defended once again. Payne's eye followed the blue line of the entry across the page to the column that noted weight, and he was confirmed in his estimate of the fish—under 300 pounds, 286. To be honest, nothing to brag about, actually. Doc's marlin would have bettered it by a few dozen pounds, and suddenly the insufficiency of the day wearied his spirit. He felt unsatisfied and irritable. Watching someone else fish was like watching someone else make love, and of course he'd rather watch than not watch, but like anyone but a fool, he'd rather do. On the boat, watching the young mate fumble with the gaff until finally the fish spit the hook, Payne could barely contain himself from yelling, *That's not the way you do it, for Christ's sake!* He was still bent over the register, making notes, when he heard his name called and looked up, and there was Señor So-and-so, whatever his name was, the deputy from the ministry of information who, two days earlier, had issued Payne his accreditation, a tedious process that had required him to lose half a day sitting in the offices of the Cuban press agency while the bureaucrats tried to determine if he was who he said he was. "I'm nobody worth this much of your time," he had wanted to say, but then he had never understood why bureaucracies and their glacial mechanisms functioned the same under any system, good or bad, large or small.

"Señor Payne, I need you please to come with me, okay?"

"Is something wrong?" Elliott Payne answered absently, studying the man's attire, his chinos and white guayabera, and then staring at the mustache crowning his indulgent smile until suddenly he remembered his deputy's name. Diaz. There was nothing Payne could read as menacing in the lines of the man's expression, but in his dark, unwavering eyes was a grave but nevertheless respectful concern, and he seemed to have lost the ease of authority he had displayed so self-importantly from behind his desk at the ministry. The official took his elbow, lightly—Payne liked it that the Cubans did this, touching you when they talked—and led him back past the fueling dock, the *Cerebella* still hosting the scrum of reporters, the jaunty neurosurgeon lavished with attention, surrounded by the messengers of the world.

Diaz smiled, nodding once at the boat. "The Jew wins nothing, but still the journalists love him, no?"

Payne was taken off guard by the comment. Was he supposed to answer that? He didn't know if, like so much of the planet, the Cubans had a problem with Jews. Maybe that was the Soviet influence, an annotated contamination after 30 years of influence—Oh, by the way, we despise the Jews too, money-grubbing bankers and all—but the official had said it without apparent malice, casually and with mild amusement, as though he had made a charmingly astute observation.

"He's colorful," said Payne with a trace of sarcasm, tired of the doc's crude allure. "They just want a story."

"Yes, that's true," Diaz said, and Payne was puzzled by the soft lash of irony in his voice. "And you? What about you, Señor Payne? No big fish? No story?"

Elliott Payne began to explain about the article he would write, the focus on the revival of the tournament and its fabled history, the entrepreneurial miracle of Marina Hemingway itself, the glasnost of sportfishing in Cuba, all of these things of equal or greater significance to his editor than the egomaniacal neurosurgeon who had broken the embargo, but he saw that the deputy from the ministry of information was not listening to him. They took a shortcut across the manicured grass in front of a row of condos, Diaz releasing his elbow as they stepped onto the walkway that would take them through the posh complex to the parking lot. Again Payne asked if anything was wrong. And what could it be, anyway? Yes, he had flown in from Mérida without the proper documentation, but the Cubans had fawned over him the minute he stepped off the plane, not stamping his passport even though he had wanted a souvenir, waving him through customs, putting him into a taxi that took him straight to La Prensa, where this very man had fixed the paperwork and then sent him off to Cubanacán, the newly formed and stupendously powerful tourist agency where, without Payne even asking, they had provided him with a car and driver and a ration book for securing gasoline. *We love love love Americans. Americans are welcome here!* He didn't know Cuba, didn't know much about Cuba, had never been there before, and so he was wary. He knew not to talk to dissidents on the streets—on more than one level that was not a particularly legitimate way to spend his time in Cuba—but he sure as hell had legitimacy here at the marina, with the boats, among the fishermen. He had bought a box of Cohibas on the black market from a starving old man, but did anybody really care about a transgression as expected and predictable as that? Was he in trouble for cigars? In the parking lot was a black late-model Mercedes sedan, the driver holding the door open for them and, incredibly, an escort of armed soldiers in an open jeep, squinting now at Elliott Payne's hesitation, watching him decide what to do as he stopped and set his feet.

"Hold on," he said, alarmed, his voice bolting out of his throat. He felt a chill burst of sweat under his arms and across the back of his neck. "Am I in trouble?"

"Not at all, Señor Payne," Diaz said, but the dry exactness of his courtesy was not reassuring.

"Am I being deported?"

"Of course not, Mr. Payne. You are our guest, but please, you must come in the car with me. Please. You know the godfather, yes? Everyone knows the godfather. I am offering you a story you can't refuse."

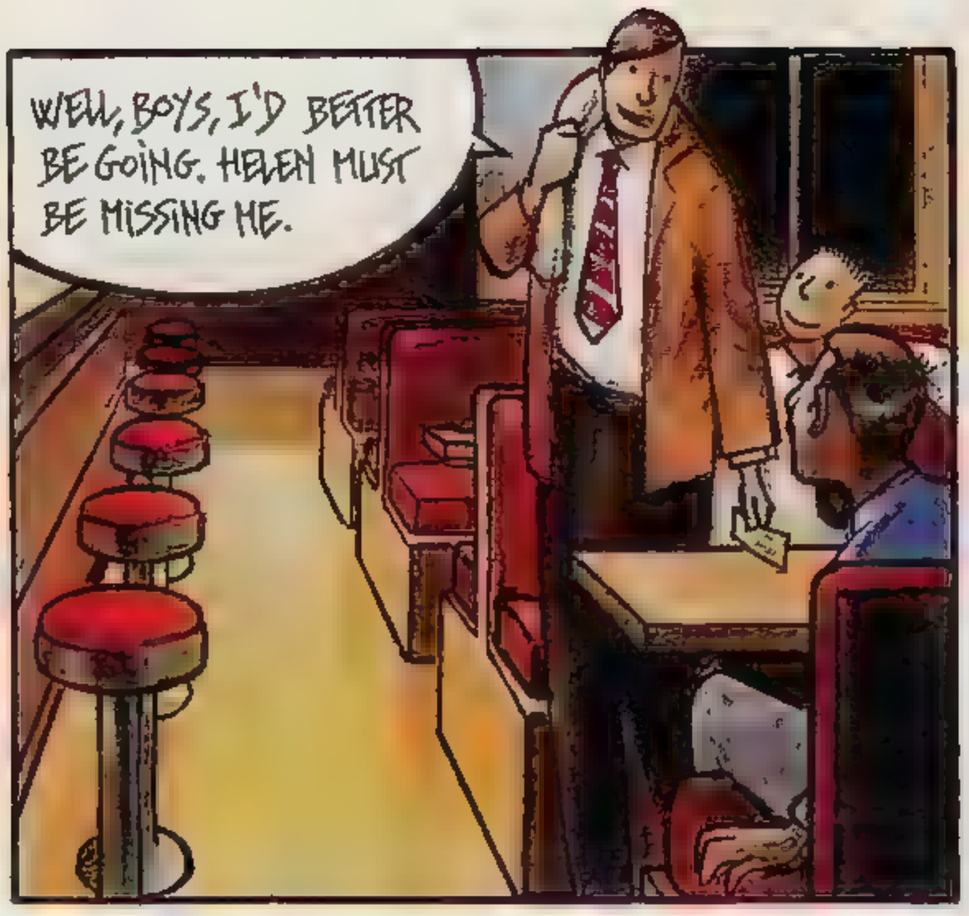
"You know," he said amiably, trying not to be offensive, "unless it's about fishing, it wouldn't interest me." He studied the ashen pouches under Diaz's eyes, his slicked-back hair; the deputy's suave demeanor now turned tense and, Payne sensed, dangerous, trying to judge if he had to obey this man.

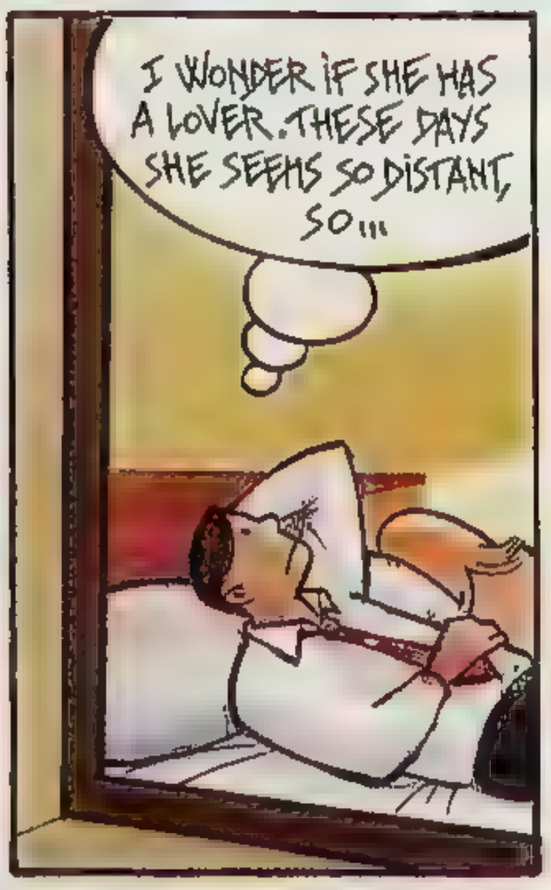
"Something like a type of fishing, Señor Payne." He heard the impatience in the deputy's voice. Diaz's lip lifted in a self-aware smile, recognizing a joke he never intended. "Yes, about fishing. Please get in the car."

They rode in air-conditioned silence

(continued on page 150)

Cool Lover





JUAN ALVAREZ · JORGE

JAIME UNTAMED

THIS FREE-SPIRITED HOLLYWOOD STAR IS READY TO BUST LOOSE

Considering her undeniable sex appeal and her capacity for being the focal point of any crowd, you'd think Jaime Pressly's natural habitat would be the glitzy Hollywood gala. Think again. "I could care less about red carpets and velvet ropes," says the high-flying star of the new action film *Torque*. "It's like pulling teeth to get me to those things. I want to go sit at a hole-in-the-wall with my friends, knock back a margarita, talk about real stuff and laugh." Suddenly we wish we'd invited the 26-year-old actress to meet us somewhere—anywhere—more down-to-earth than a swank poolside cafe. But even dressed down in jeans, a T-shirt and a knit cap, Jaime outshines the trendy surroundings.

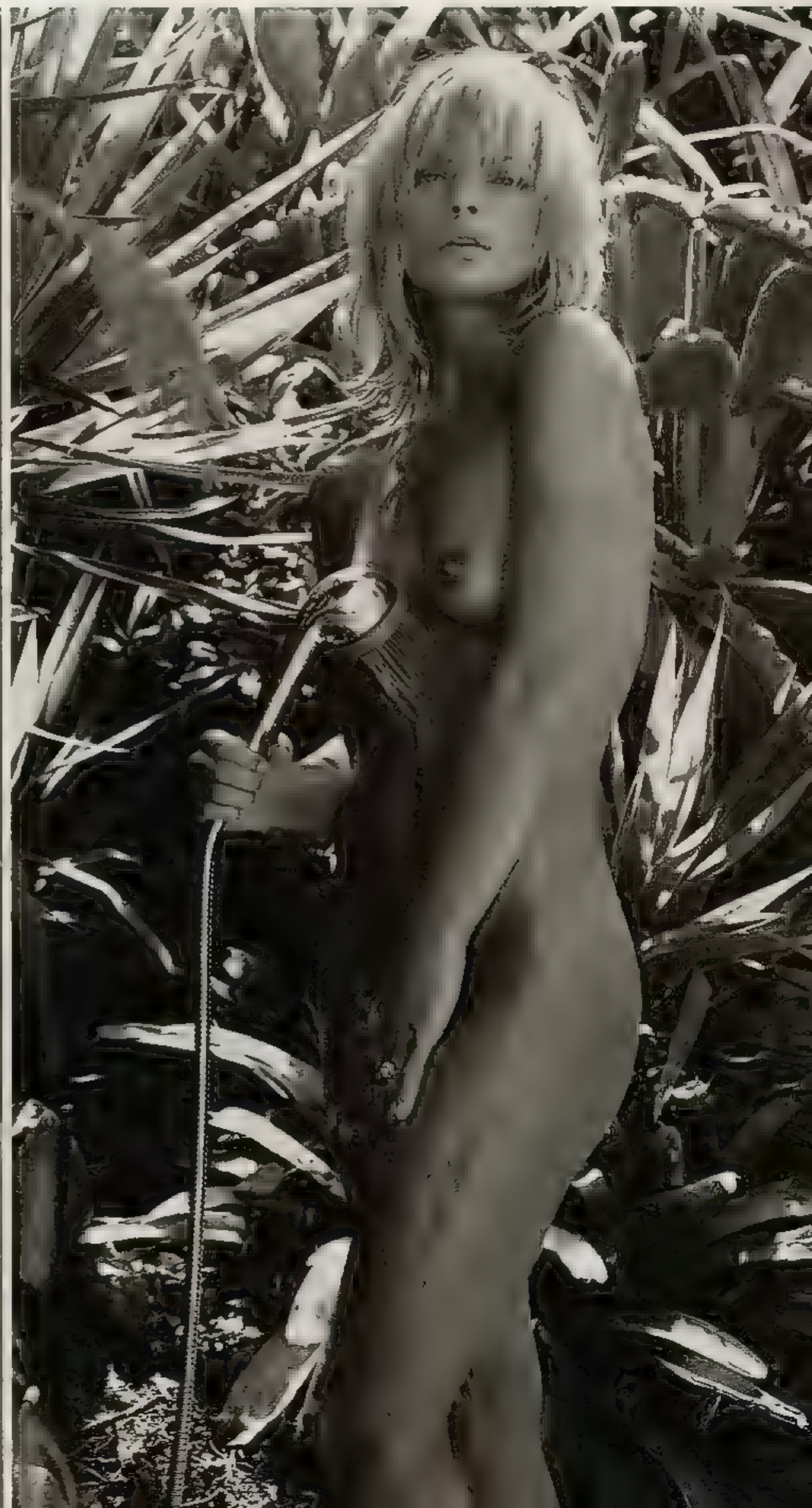
Jaime comes by her affinity for the simpler

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PATRICK DEMARCHELIER

things naturally: She grew up in rural North Carolina and returns there often to visit her family. "We go out on a boat to fish, and my favorite part is scaling, cleaning and filleting the catch before we cook it up," she says. With a dance instructor for a mother, Jaime was pulling off pirouettes almost as soon as she could walk, and she began years of rigorous dance and gymnastics training at the age of three. By the time Jaime was in her teens, her looks were making *other* people do somersaults, and at 15 she became legally emancipated—with her parents' blessing—so she could work as a model in Japan and Italy. She's lived on her own ever since, but all that freedom has never clouded her judgment. "I was the youngest model in my group in Tokyo, and we lived right around the corner from the main drag where all the bars and clubs are. I would go out with them every night and was kind of like the babysitter," she says. "I didn't drink or do drugs; I was there to work. I'm Southern, so I have morals and a brain, and I give a damn about my career."

Jaime's big-screen debut was in 1997's *Poison Ivy: The New Seduction,* a movie that tops many a guy's guilty-pleasures list. Though the plot seems to revolve around Jaime's frequently naked, soaking-wet physique more than anything else, the film did lead to more roles, including the dancer downstairs on the WB's *Jack & Jill* and a corrosive head cheerleader in the 2001 spoof *Not Another Teen Movie.* She smiles widely when we mention that she plays an excellent bitch in the latter. "It was a composite of all the characters I was up for and didn't get, so I got to poke fun at them all in one role," she says. Now she's playing a biker babe in the fast and furious *Torque,* starring Ice Cube. "My character is the bad boy's girlfriend," she says. "She's got a pierced nose, her whole back is tattooed, she drives a chopper, and she walks around with a butterfly knife. I already knew about motorcycles. In fact, right before *Torque* I did an Aerosmith video and taught all the other girls how to ride, because they were scared even to get on the Vespas we were using."

Showbiz parties aren't the only Hollywood trappings Jaime avoids; for now, she says, she has sworn off dating actors. "I'm an actress, and actresses get a little crazy sometimes. I think if I were limited to being only with somebody



Jaime has a Leo tattoo at the base of her back with Chinese writing that translates to "healthy, strong and brave." She wasn't always hip to inking, though. "I thought tattoos looked cool on other people," she says. "But my attitude was, if you wouldn't put graffiti on the *Mona Lisa*, why would you do it to your body? I've got this rebel thing in me, so I eventually got one."

SEE MORE NUDES OF JAIME AT CYBER.PLAYBOY.COM.

else in this business I would be single for the rest of my life. My job drove some former boyfriends crazy. They hated that other guys would look at me. My response was, 'Right, but see, they are the ones who pay to see my movie and rent my DVD. I'm flattered and lucky that I have fans in the first place, and I'm going to talk to them and be nice to them. Plus, a lot of girls come up to me too.'"

Jaime recently finished starring in and co-producing the upcoming independent film *Death to the Supermodel.* "It's a spoof on the modeling industry, and I play the overbearingly perky editor of a magazine that's going downhill," she says. "I found that producing comes naturally to me. I like making sure my crew is taken care of."

She likes taking care of business, too. A self-described multitasker, Jaime juggled several projects around her tropical PLAYBOY shoot, including landing a recurring role on the CBS series *Becker,* volunteering for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation and finalizing her new clothing line. "I started sketching designs during downtime on the *Torque* set, and it turned into a lingerie-and-sleepwear line," she says. "I've always loved designing. Now the things I have created are in high-end boutiques, and they're called J'aime—French for 'I love.'"

Actress, producer, fashion designer. Whether or not she shuns the red carpet, Jaime has certainly come a long way from lazy days spent waiting for the fish to bite in North Carolina. "I love home because it's relaxing," she says, "but I wouldn't exactly call myself the same girl. Now I'm used to the faster pace. It's slow there, and I go crazy after a while because I need to work. I like being able to captivate people, to take them out of their reality and make them feel something else—something better—for a while."

MAKEUP BY MARIE JOSÉE LAFONTAINE
HAIR BY MICHEL ALEMAN FOR FRÉDÉRIC FEKKAI BEAUTÉ
STYLING BY LISA MARIE FERNANDEZ

JOHNNY TAPIA *(continued from page 84)*

Teresa's bridal night was spent alone in a sleazy motel. Tapia went to make a call and didn't come back.

my grandpa's footsteps. He'd been a coal miner and he had black lung, but he'd get me up early in the morning and go running with me."

Over the next nine years Tapia assembled an amateur record of 101 wins and 21 losses. Fighting in the 112-pound Junior Fly division, he won the National Golden Gloves, PAL and Junior Olympic championships. When Tapia was 21 he turned pro. Fighting seven or eight times a year as a flyweight he stormed the division, winning the USBA title. He had a promotional contract with boxing powerhouse Top Rank. He was being offered soft drink commercials and other endorsements.

Tapia says he never did drugs while he was an amateur, "because I wanted to be champion of the world, and I wanted my grandpa to be proud of me." By the time he had turned pro, however, "it was an on-and-off thing." In 1990 Tapia was undefeated in 22 pro bouts when he tested positive for cocaine three times. He was banned from the sport until he could clean himself up.

"I was out for three years and seven months. That was the worst time of my life," says Tapia. He was homeless, jobless, in and out of jail and strung out on cocaine and heroin.

THE COMEBACK

Teresa Chavez first ran into Tapia at a party in 1992, when she was 20 years old. He approached her, and she brushed him off. "I had no idea who Johnny Tapia was," she says. The snub only challenged him. He kept cropping up. He went out of his way to meet and befriend one of her brothers. He started hanging out with her cousins. "My grandmother had known him for years," says Teresa, "because one of his favorite things was going to the senior center to dance with the old ladies. They were friends."

He was living on the street. He made money fighting in the back rooms and beer coolers of bars. "The only rule was that no guns were allowed," says Teresa. "He'd sit me in a booth and tell me to wait. He'd come back after a while looking roughed up, with a case of beer under one arm and some money."

As one reporter put it, "Johnny could charm the venom from a snake." Teresa's mother adored him. Her grandmother let him live in her house. He begged Teresa to marry him until the older women got sick of hearing about it and urged her to say yes just to shut him up. In 1993 Teresa and Johnny were married by a justice of the peace at the Wells Park Community Center.

On the afternoon of their wedding Teresa was sitting on her mother's sofa surrounded by wedding guests when one of Tapia's cousins approached her. "If you want to see what you married," he said, "go look in the bathroom."

She opened the bathroom door and found Tapia with a needle in his arm. He tried to shove her out of the room. "What a mistake I'd made," she says. "It was a slap in the face. Reality." Tapia later got into a fight on the lawn, and the police arrived. They let him go when he agreed to leave for his honeymoon.

Teresa's bridal night was spent alone in a sleazy motel. Tapia said he had to make a phone call, then took her car and didn't come back. "I was too humiliated to call anyone and tell them I was alone," she says.

The next morning her mother took her to the hospital, where Tapia was in a coma from a drug overdose. The doctors told the weeping Teresa that they didn't know if he would make it and that if he did there might be brain damage. They asked if she wanted a priest. Then Tapia awoke, ripped the tubes out of his arms and ran out of the hospital with the gown flapping over his butt. He thought the cops were coming for him. Teresa drove around the hospital until he came out of hiding, then took him home.

A pattern emerged. He'd disappear on a drug binge and come back days or weeks later to be nursed back to health. Then he'd do it again. She tried moving him out of Albuquerque to a town nearby. She went to Mexico with him, where his grandparents paid to have a witch pray over him. In their first year together she had two failed pregnancies and decided not to try for children again.

Teresa eventually had had enough. She found her own apartment in Albuquerque and worked two jobs, focusing on saving money, getting a divorce and starting over. Tapia was in jail. His manager, Paul Chavez, begged Teresa to take her husband back when he got out. Teresa told Chavez to take Tapia into his own house to clean him up. "He said, 'What if he robs me? Or kills me?'" says Teresa. "It was obviously okay if Johnny robbed or killed me."

She finally agreed to take him back on her own terms. Her tiny one-bedroom apartment had iron bars on all the windows and doors. Tapia agreed to be locked in for two months. Teresa had saved enough money to quit her jobs and lock herself in with him. Her mother brought food every day and shoved it through the bars of a window. The first weeks were horrible, with Tapia screaming in withdrawal, then raging or weeping, begging for at least a beer. "We fought like crazy. He hated my guts," says Teresa.

At one point Tapia erupted in fury at the confinement. He ripped through the apartment, breaking dishes and ornaments. Snatching a heavy iron-framed mirror from the wall, he swung it at Teresa, meaning to hit her, but it smashed on the floor. Fed up with feeling threatened, Teresa grabbed a shard of mirror and leaped at Tapia, stabbing him in the thigh. Shocked and bleeding, Tapia ran around the small rooms, yelping and spraying blood. Furious, Teresa "pulled a Johnny" herself, yelling and throwing things.

He showed her his bleeding leg. "Look what you did to me!" he screamed, and she kicked the wound. He was afraid of her then.

The fourth week, she says, "we actually started talking. Finding out a lot about each other and feelings that he had of inadequacy as an adult that stem back to childhood problems." He began to get in shape, running in place and doing jumping jacks and sit-ups and push-ups in the apartment. "He started to transform into this awesome human being. That's when I fell in love with him. Because I knew there was a good person under there, and he didn't mind it anymore that we were locked in." Tapia gets a goofy grin remembering Teresa's apartment. "It was a safe place," he says, "where Big Macs just appeared, sliding through the bars."

In March 1994 Tapia and his trainer flew to Oklahoma for his first legal bout in years. For the first time Teresa would see her husband fight. She was terrified. On the phone before the match she begged him not to go through with it. Tapia knocked out Jaime Olvera in the fourth round. In July he won the North American Boxing Federation championship, stopping his opponent in the third round.

"He got paid $10,000 for that fight, one of his biggest paydays at that time," says Teresa. "After the manager's cut, we had $7,000 left. We were going to pay bills." The couple stopped at a cafe for lunch, and Tapia began to pick at Teresa, deliberately trying to set off an argument. He'd been clean for seven months, and she had forgotten the signs of his wanting to use again. Back on the road, he pulled over, pushed her out of the car and drove off. Then he made a U-turn and came back. She expected him to invite her back in. Instead he grabbed her purse, took all the money, threw down the purse and drove off again. She made her way home by bus and heard on TV the news of Tapia's arrest for selling cocaine. It turned out to be soap.

"Every three or four months," says Teresa, "he'd slip up. He'd take off. I wouldn't see him or hear from him." She

would bail him out and clean him up and get him back in the ring, where nobody could touch him. In October 1994, in his hometown, Johnny Tapia won his first world title, the World Boxing Organization championship, and he cried for joy in the ring. A few months later the couple adopted their first child, Jonathon, from a relative of Teresa's. (The Tapias adopted Lorenzo, the son of a family friend, about three years ago.)

The following year, while Tapia was training for a tough defense of his world title, one of Teresa's brothers was in the hospital. Teresa came home from visiting him to find Johnny gone. According to police reports, he then showed up high at five in the morning and threatened Teresa with a gun, accusing her of having an affair with his boxing rival, Romero. He shoved her around; when she went to call the police, he ran away and left the gun behind. She filed charges. The police couldn't find him, and he came back later that day. He didn't remember what he'd done.

The couple's lawyer made a deal that Tapia wouldn't have to appear in court until after his title fight against Arthur Johnson. He squeaked by with a majority decision. Then, with the check for his $60,000 share of the $100,000 purse, Tapia disappeared once more. He had to be in court the following week. He surfaced again in a hospital; someone had driven up to the emergency room door and thrown him out onto the pavement. Overdose. As soon as he woke up and was released, he disappeared.

SHANGHAIED

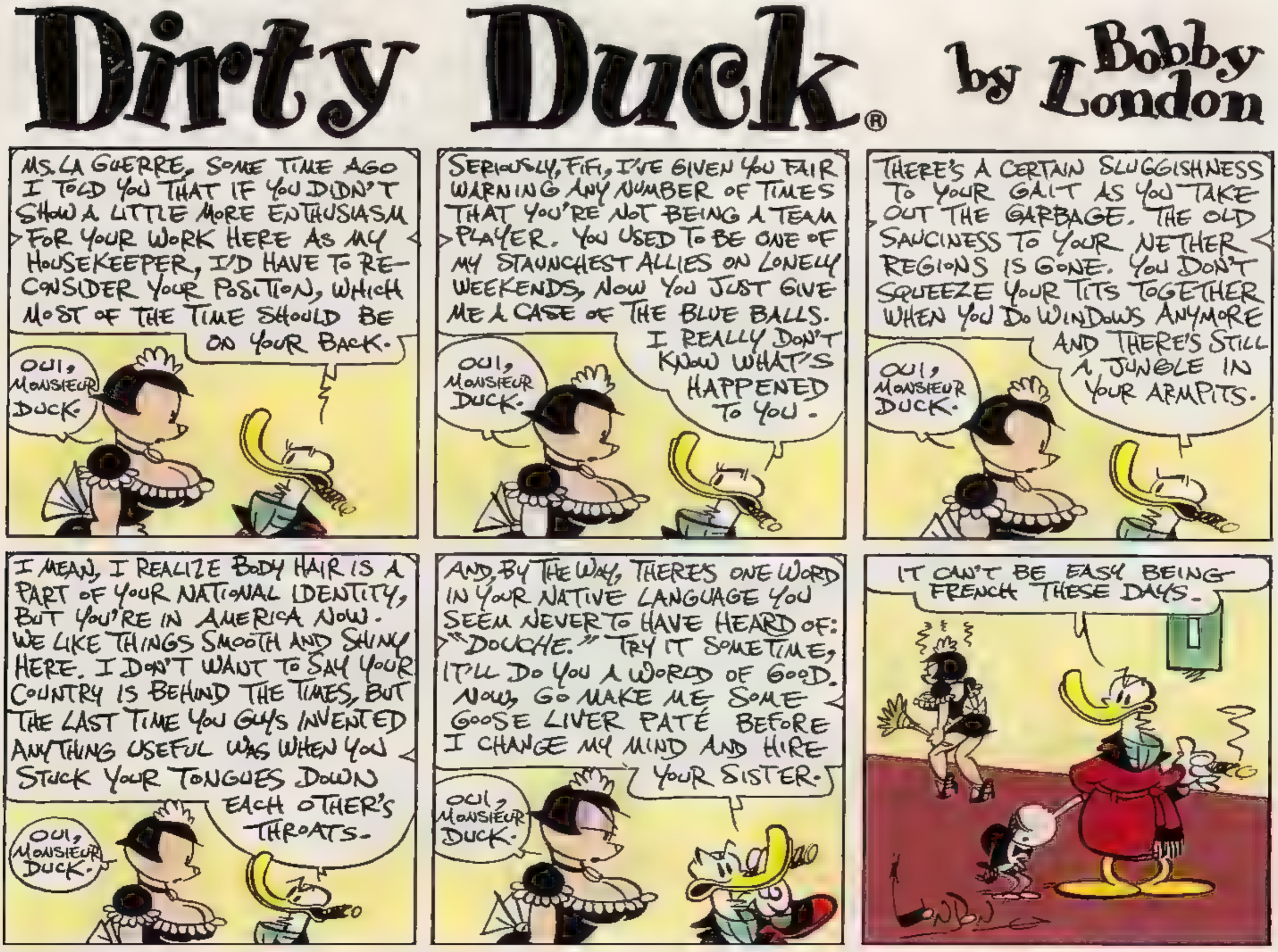
Tapia now faced serious time. Desperate, Teresa went to Judge Frank Allen. The judge laid out the requirements—get Tapia out of New Mexico and into rehab and probation programs. He didn't want to see or hear about him anymore. Top Rank, Tapia's promoter, put Teresa in touch with Oscar De La Hoya, who had a mountain training camp in Big Bear, California.

"Bring Johnny to Big Bear," De La Hoya told her. "My trainer will work with him. He can train at my gym. We'll help you make arrangements. You can get a temporary house." She lined up the treatment programs in the vicinity—all without Johnny's knowledge.

Fearing that Tapia would miss a court date during his latest binge, she tricked him into returning home. When he walked in the door, her family and his doctor were waiting in the living room. They grabbed him and pinned him down while the doctor administered a tranquilizer that put Tapia to sleep. With the doctor monitoring his condition, they kept Tapia tranquilized for days, allowing him to emerge for the court appearance and then medicating him again. They packed without his noticing. Teresa and her mother and brother put him into a car and took off for California with Tapia drugged. Whenever he was awake enough to eat during the trip, they drugged his food. He was in a stupor when they arrived at the house in Big Bear and wrangled him up to the second-floor bedroom. Tapia's previous house had only one floor, so when he woke up during the night he fell down the stairs. "Teresa, I don't know what's wrong with me," he screamed. "I'm hallucinating so bad I see places I've never seen before."

For a month Tapia hated the exile from Albuquerque. Then he decided to be a sport. "Oscar was a good influence," says Teresa. "He would tell Johnny, 'You have a lot of talent. You have to do the right things. We have more to prove because we are Hispanic.'"

Tapia's ring name had been the Baby-Faced Assassin, but the years and the scars were draining the juice from that moniker. De La Hoya and his trainer, Roberto Alcazar, gave Tapia his new name. "Whenever I walked into the gym," Tapia says, "they'd say, 'Ah, *mi vida loca!*' Because I was so crazy all the time."



The 18 months of court-supervised exile from New Mexico kept Tapia clean. He fought regularly and took frequent drug screens. When he had a bout in New Mexico, he had to ask permission from the court and file a detailed in-and-out flight plan. By the time the restrictions ended, Tapia had his own gym and house in Big Bear and stayed on. But then the binges began again.

WHO'S DRIVING?

By 1995 Tapia's old manager, Paul Chavez, refused to work with him. Teresa took over. Four of his world titles were won under her management. He is one of the few boxers in the "little guy" divisions to earn a million-dollar purse. She negotiates contracts with promoters and television networks, accepts or rejects opponents and handles all finances and business affairs. "Johnny always waits outside or in another room," she explains. "Fighters never sit in when contracts are being negotiated, because it would hurt them. They are talked about like meat."

To this day Teresa struggles to maintain her calm during bouts. "He is always looking at me. If I show him a worried expression, he gets worried. When it's fight time he is not my husband; he is my fighter. You can't baby a fighter, because he is out there putting his life on the line and he needs every ounce of ferociousness to do what he has to do. I have learned not to hinder that. You have to be strong. You can't show your fear, because he reflects your emotion and absorbs it."

A cruel reality is that athletes spend a lifetime developing skills that shape their identities. They are still young when they must stop and become someone else entirely. When Johnny Tapia retires from the ring, the change will be almost as dramatic for his wife as it will be for him.

Teresa is trying to figure out what life after boxing will mean for both of them. She has been negotiating with producers for a movie of her husband's life. Meanwhile she is buying a building in Albuquerque to renovate as a boxing gym where Tapia can train other fighters. Various charities would like to be involved with him. A restaurant and bar business might be a good investment. Teresa is considering Tapia cigars, Tapia tequila, Tapia clothing. Asked if she can be sure Johnny won't end up dead broke in a gutter, her eyes flicker. "He might still end up dead in a gutter," she says, "but he won't be broke."

TAPIA DAY CAMP

It is a hot August afternoon in Las Vegas, and Johnny Tapia and his two adopted sons have been in the swimming pool for hours. Jonathon, 11, demonstrates his submarine skills and says, "My dad's been teaching me since I was two." The toddler, Lorenzo, charges off the diving board, and the session ends in giggles when Tapia hoists him out and runs inside through the patio doors to change his diaper. "I didn't think I'd ever be a father," says Tapia, shaking his head.

The big stucco house has a bewildering number of rooms, including Johnny's memorabilia museum, a boxing gym and Teresa's office. Thick walls keep out the desert heat and the kids' noise. The home sits in a gated community of similar houses, and by late afternoon what Teresa calls Tapia Day Camp has the backyard swarming with neighborhood kids, who are swimming, playing basketball and bouncing on the trampoline. The children clamor for Tapia's attention, and he's there for each one, tireless. Or maybe his restless motion provides protection as much as pleasure. If he were forced to sit still, the storm in his head might take over.

Their house is always bustling with live-in relatives, visiting friends and business associates. "I have to have a lot of people around all the time," says Teresa, "because I never know what Johnny will do." She tells about a guest suite that is fitted with special locks. When Tapia was on a drug binge, Teresa barricaded herself and the children in the suite. "I took lots of videos and toys and books and food and the cell phones," she says, "and told them we were camping out."

They have weathered the binges, including one when Tapia crept through their house with a knife, sliding the blade beneath each closed door. "Now Johnny's happiest time," says Teresa, "is when he falls into bed at night and knows he's managed to get through another day. His hardest time is waking up, knowing he has another day to face."

Tapia tries to do good. There is the tale of the diner waitress who served meals to the Tapias for months. One day she broke down crying because her husband had been laid off from work. The parents and their kids were living in their car. Within 24 hours Johnny Tapia had bought them a decent house.

Sometimes there are mixed messages about what's good. Maybe family loyalty should end short of going on the lam with a violent cousin. But high drama is part of Tapia's charm. Teresa agrees: "We joke about it. Johnny says, 'If I don't give you any problems, how are you going to handle it?' I say, 'Johnny, I don't think that will ever happen.' But I think I could do with 20 years of peace and quiet."

"Forget the smile!"

COMING HOME

Neither peace nor quiet are in evidence on September 26 in Tingley Coliseum. Spotlights and big video screens flash ring close-ups to the highest reaches of the grandstands. It is obvious from the scent that this creaking arena on Albuquerque's permanent fairground hosted a rodeo only a week earlier.

The hometown fans have cheered and groaned through Tapia's tabloid roller coaster life. Tonight some 4,500 are here to hail his resurrection. "Without the crowd I'm not who I am," says Tapia. The preliminary bouts limber up their lungs, and the shout goes up the instant Tapia appears in a cloud of smoke. The familiar chant is "John-ee, John-ee" in a collective baritone.

The roaring crowd generates enough heat to make Tapia young again in this,

his 58th professional fight. For 27-year-old Carlos Contreras, this will be his 29th. Fighting out of the hungry warrens of Juárez, Mexico, Contreras is strong, skilled and intent on a win.

When the bell rings Contreras charges, and Tapia nails him with a three-punch combination—jab, hook, right hand. Tapia's left arm, practically disabled after his last bout, against Barrera, is back, and it is fast. His reflexes are tuned high. His old legs pivot constantly to fresh angles. Tapia doesn't have to stay at a distance or run. He makes Contreras miss from inches away. He is so elusive that his opponent grows desperate by the third round and twice tackles him to the floor. Contreras tries everything: grappling, head banging, elbow-flying fouls and straight hard punching. The referee shows his irritation, but Tapia seems to enjoy it all.

Tapia pays Contreras the compliment of gut-wrenching hooks and jaw-jarring uppercuts—the respect of a nose-to-nose battle. With the 10th round in his complete control, Tapia leans over the ropes to greet New Mexico governor Bill Richardson, who's sitting ringside. "But then Carlos hit me," Tapia would explain later, "so I had to get back to it." The kid stays dangerous to the final bell, and Tapia comes through with a solid decision against a tough, young and determined opponent.

The crowd's voice shakes the roof. Black and silver balloons rain down. Tapia lifts Contreras onto his shoulders and asks the crowd to honor him. Not as polite as Tapia, they boo.

At the news conference afterward Tapia's face is swollen and cut, but he says he is ready for more. He hopes for two or three more bouts and then a championship fight soon. He wants to retire on a winning note. "This was a big experience," he says. "People say I'm too old, don't have anything left after the coma. I was really nervous. But I'm glad to be home. I couldn't believe the atmosphere, with everybody screaming."

Speaking through a translator, Contreras says he hadn't expected Tapia to be in such good condition. "He's a little crazy, but in Mexico craziness is recognized as part of sanity," he says.

As for the other craziness—the drugs

ROBERT BLAKE

(continued from page 64)

blood coming out her nose, like a lot. It wasn't completely runny and didn't look completely fresh. It was mucousy already.... She was totally catatonic. I looked into her eyes. They were all over the place. No focus. No anything."

When Blake returned, the man says, he tried to console him. After the paramedics arrived, Blake began crying.

"What I found odd," the man says in a confidential tone, "was there were no tears. I'm a director, so I'm looking at him as an actor.... It's really weird to see someone go"—the man acts out heart-wrenching sobs—"and nothing is coming out. I don't know if it's shock that shuts it off. I have no clue."

PART II: INVESTIGATION

MONDAY, MAY 7, 2001
MURDER WEAPON

The squad room is thrumming with activity. Captain Jim Tatreau, the commander of Robbery-Homicide, wants an update on the case, so he calls a meeting in his office. Ito, Eguchi and Hartwell, along with four other Homicide II detectives drafted to help with the Bakley investigation—Knolls, Brian McCartin, Whelan and Whelan's partner, Jim Gollaz—assemble around the conference table. The mood in the room is uncharacteristically tense and subdued, with little of the usual humor and razzing. The supervisors and detectives knew this murder would attract some attention, but because the victim was an aging grifter and Blake was best known for a television show canceled more than 20 years ago, they had not anticipated the firestorm of publicity. Now the specter of the O.J. Simpson debacle hovers over this investigation.

Ito opens the meeting by telling the detectives that Sunday's autopsy revealed that either shot could have been the fatal one. "The one in the shoulder severed the carotid artery, lodged in the aorta and caused severe internal bleeding." The trajectory of the shots was almost level, with a slightly upward tilt. "This means the shooter was crouching," Ito says. "He was using the Dumpster for cover. Since she allowed the shooter to get so close, she probably knew him."

The coroner removed a slug from the aorta, "with stria visible, so it's good for comparison," Ito says. He is still waiting for Ballistics to confirm that the Walther was the murder weapon. "There was no stippling, so the head shot wasn't a contact wound. But since the casing was in the car, she was probably shot at pretty close range. No defense wounds on her hands."

Ito then delivers the bad news: LAPD technicians could not lift a single print from the gun. "Not even a smudge," he says. "And we keep trying to run the gun different ways. Nothing. We figure it's unregistered."

Eguchi drives to the Firearms Analysis Unit, housed in a weathered single-story structure about five miles north of downtown. He clutches the Walther in a large manila envelope. Ito explains to a supervisor that the gun was found in the Dumpster and asks, "Does a Walther eject like a Beretta?"

The supervisor shakes his head: A Walther is the rare semiautomatic pistol that ejects casings to the left.

Ito now knows how one of the casings ended up inside the car. The shooter was crouching beside the car, slightly behind Bakley, when he shot her in the head. The casing flew into the open window.

All the detectives on the Bakley case now meet in Tatreau's office, including Robert Bub, who has just been assigned the job of clue coordinator. He will sift through all the tips and phone calls and grade them in order of importance. Then a civilian employee will enter them in the computer.

"I got a call at home from Firearms last night at 11," Ito says, opening the meeting. Everyone looks up immediately. "They made the coroner's bullet to the Walther." He pauses as the detectives nod appreciatively. "So we have the murder weapon."

"Any news on the ejector marks?" Hartwell asks.

"We're still waiting," Ito says. "What do we have on tracing the gun?"

"A manufacturer does not have to report sales on guns made before 1968," Whelan says.

"Let's see if there's a way to trace guns brought over here from Germany after the war," Ito says.

Whelan reports the findings of an LAPD blood-splatter expert: "The crime lab determined she was shot right there at that location"—not shot, dumped in the car and then driven to the street near Vitello's. "She was most likely shot in the shoulder first. And when she was leaning over the console she was shot the second time. There were a few specks of blood on the driver's seat. They would have smeared if someone had sat in the seat after she was killed. The blood splatters have what's called a directional tail, so we can determine where the shot came from."

MOTIVE

On Tuesday afternoon, four days after the murder, Bakley's sister, Margerry, arrives at the squad room door accompanied by a tabloid reporter who has paid for her exclusive story. Margerry, four years younger than her sister, is heavyset and pasty-faced and wears black stretch pants, a coral-colored T-shirt and brown leather sandals. Ito and Eguchi are busy examining the evidence, so Whelan and Gollaz escort her to an interview room—without the tabloid reporter. Margerry recounts the night Bonny met Blake and her occasional visits back to Los Angeles.

"Every time they had sex, he'd call her afterward, worried about her being pregnant. He'd say, 'You've got to be pregnant. I'm Italian. We have very strong sperm.'"

Sometimes they would have sex in the car. But even when they had sex at Blake's house, Margerry says, he would not allow Bakley to spend the night or even to sleep in his bed. "She had to talk about it," Margerry says. "She was so elated. Some of the conversations were for six or seven hours. I'd fall asleep or hang up."

Margerry then tells the detectives about Christian Brando. "She had a better relationship with him than with Blake. He was nice," she says earnestly, "for a murderer."

"Nicer than most murderers?" Whelan asks dryly.

Margerry looks flustered. "I don't know how to put it."

"Let's talk about the baby," Whelan says.

Bakley timed her visits to Los Angeles for when she was ovulating, and to enhance her chances she took the fertility drug Clomid, Margerry says.

"Why'd she want to get pregnant?" Gollaz asks.

"She wanted to marry him, and she knew she couldn't get him unless she got pregnant. She read an article on how to take a tampon, put cellophane on it, insert it afterward and stand on your head so the sperm won't come out." Margerry holds her palms together as if praying.

"Did she try this for a while or did it work the first time?" Gollaz asks.

Margerry smiles. "I think it worked the first time."

Blake was enraged at the news of her pregnancy, according to Margerry, and asked Bakley to have an abortion. When he realized she would not terminate the pregnancy he cut off contact with her. Back home in Little Rock, Arkansas, where she was on parole for possession of stolen identity and credit cards, Bakley gave birth to a baby girl on June 2, 2000; she sent pictures of the child to Blake, who took a paternity test that proved he had fathered the child.

In September 2000 Bakley flew out to L.A. with the baby and met Blake along with, according to court records, a former employee of the actor who posed as a nanny. While Bakley was there, Blake managed to separate her from the child. He then paid a private investigator to contact Bakley's probation officer in Arkansas, where, he hoped, she would be placed under house arrest for parole violation. She reportedly filed a complaint accusing Blake of kidnapping. Then, in October, Blake inexplicably agreed to marriage and moved Bakley into the guesthouse behind his home. According to Margerry, however, he kept up his threats about her betrayal. "She was saying all the time, 'He's going to kill me, he's going to kill me.'"

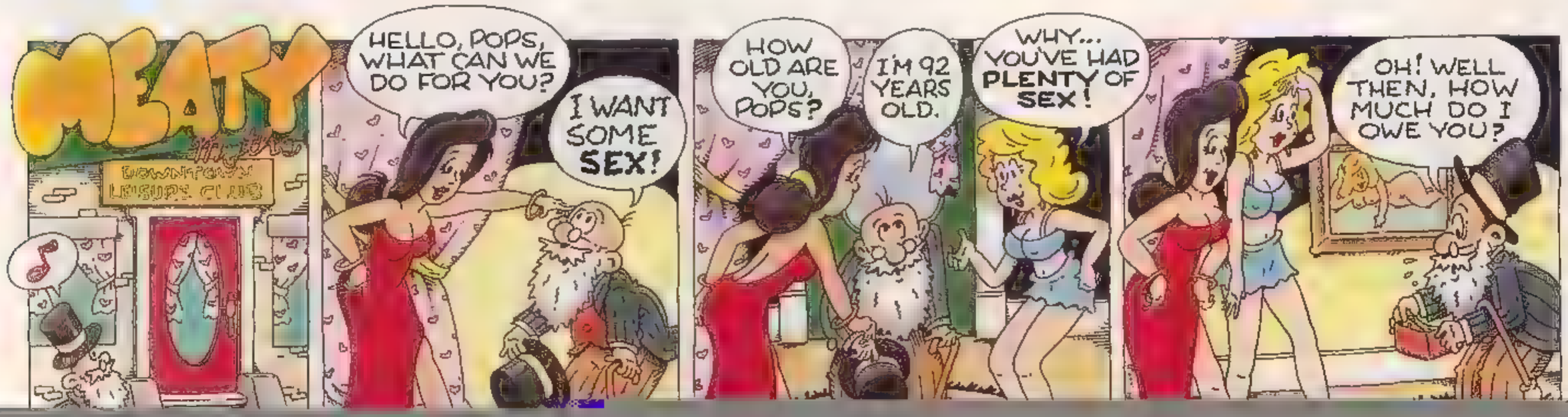
THE BODYGUARD

Thursday is the first morning the detectives do not meet in Tatreau's office: He is too busy negotiating with Blake's attorney, Harland Braun. In Blake's guesthouse, Bakley had left numerous boxes of letters from her male correspondents; Braun plans to turn them over to the LAPD. He has told reporters that many of these men had a motive to kill Bakley and are potential suspects because she ripped them off.

A few hours later, in the early evening, Earle Caldwell, whom friends described as Blake's bodyguard and handyman, stops by the squad room. Ito believes Caldwell may be a key to the case.

Fortuitously, a friend of Bakley's has just called the station with a tip about Caldwell: Bakley had confided, the friend says, that after a trip with Blake to Arizona they visited Sequoia National Park, and she suspected that Caldwell was supposed to kill her but that he was so nervous he became sick and could not pull the trigger.

Ito had attempted to interview Caldwell the day before, but he refused, saying he wanted a lawyer with him. Today



he is accompanied by one, paid for by Blake. Caldwell, unshaved and balding, is about six feet tall, slender and fit, yet he does not have the physical presence of a bodyguard.

When Bakley lived in the guesthouse, Caldwell says, she and Blake "were lovey-dovey."

"Don't you think that's odd when they were sleeping in separate residences?" Ito asks sarcastically, but Caldwell does not respond.

When Bakley visited, Caldwell says, he served as her bodyguard. He noticed that she was constantly looking over her shoulder as if she feared someone was following her. Bakley was afraid of an old boyfriend from New Jersey. Caldwell says, "His attitude was, 'If I can't have you, no one can.'"

Caldwell then recounts a story similar to the one Blake had told North Hollywood detectives about a man they called Buzzcut, who appeared to be staking out the house. At the end of the interview Ito asks Caldwell who he thinks would want to kill Bakley. Caldwell says he believes Blake was actually the target of the hit and Bakley was killed by accident. Bakley had the motive, Caldwell says, because she would benefit financially.

But Bakley had signed a prenuptial agreement, so Ito knows she would not have inherited Blake's estate. Barely disguising his irritation, Ito asks Caldwell if he will take a polygraph exam. He refuses, saying he does not trust the results.

At about nine P.M. Ito returns to the squad room, coughing and scowling. Knolls pulls up a chair next to him. "Well, Ron, where do we stand?"

"Blake did it, man," Ito says. He tells Knolls he had been perplexed because he didn't know why a 67-year-old man would want custody of a baby. But through interviews with Blake's acquaintances, Ito recently learned that the actor's daughter, who is in her mid-30s, is childless. During the past year, ever since Blake's private investigators hustled Bakley to the airport, she has been caring for the baby at her Hidden Hills home.

"So how're we going to prove he did it?" Knolls asks.

"I want to find someone who Blake told that he did it," Ito says.

"We're not going to find that," Knolls says.

"It's still early on," Ito says. "Someone may surface."

Earlier, at a coffee shop meeting, a detective asks Eguchi about the gun he found in the Dumpster.

"Looks like an antique German gun," Eguchi says. "No markings."

"Wouldn't it be great if the gun was a Beretta?" Ito says.

Although the Walther was unregistered, another detective says, "If there's some way to connect Blake to it, he's through."

PART III: A BREAK IN THE CASE
ENTER THE STUNTMEN

The investigation continues. A warrant is executed, and about a dozen detectives search Blake's home and property. The actor's living room is cluttered with dirty clothes and baby toys, with a leather saddle in one corner and a stroller in another. Other rooms suggest a man trapped between adolescence and old age, with shelves and cabinets filled with toy soldiers, vintage Lone Ranger comic books, BB guns, cowboy memorabilia and Native American relics. With the evidence carted off, the detectives continue to interview family and friends of the victim, including her brother, Joey.

While interviewing Joey about Blake, Ito checks his pager, which is buzzing. Mike Coffey, the detective supervisor for North Hollywood Homicide, says, "We've got a guy here who says he was solicited by Blake to kill his wife."

Coffey waits in an interview room with a man named Gary McLarty, who called the station with the revelation that Blake had asked him to kill Bakley. McLarty is a retired stuntman who first met Blake when he worked on the *Baretta* set roughly 30 years ago. At 61, stocky and weather-beaten, he still looks fit enough to perform stunt work.

Coffey walks out into the hallway, greets the detectives and quickly briefs them. Then Ito and Eguchi join McLarty in the interview room and introduce themselves.

"We're from RHD—downtown," Ito tells McLarty. "We stole this case from Mike Coffey. The reason we did is we have a little more time to work on one case. More manpower."

"Well, I'm a little late in revealing this, but I got so many personal problems," McLarty says sheepishly. He tells the detectives about a messy divorce and difficulties with some property he owns. "It finally got to the point where...I didn't want to lead you guys on a wrong trail, and this could tighten things up for you. I thought I better come in and reveal this thing."

"I'm glad you did," Ito says in a reassuring tone.

"That woman didn't deserve what she got," McLarty says.

"No one does," Ito says.

"With Robert, he knew I'd killed a guy a while back...so he figured because of that, and I got off and everything and he, you know——," McLarty sputters. He speaks in staccato bursts and sometimes breaks off in midsentence when he loses his train of thought. He briefly tells the detectives about the incident. The victim was an ex-convict who had raped a family friend; McLarty says he shot him in self-defense.

Until recently, the last time he had seen Blake was more than 20 years ago when they worked together on a movie called *Coast to Coast*. Then about six weeks ago a mutual acquaintance, a retired stuntman in his late 60s whom

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everyone called Snuffy, asked McLarty to meet Blake for lunch at Du-Par's restaurant in Studio City.

"Did he say why?" Ito asks.

"I figured it was a stunt job, a movie job," McLarty says.

"What happened when you met?"

"We just bullshitted, a little small talk. Then he started talking about this gal that he wanted something done with. I thought——," he says, stopping abruptly. "Hmm."

"Did he specify who this girl was?"

"He said it was this girl he met at a party and fucked one night and got pregnant. It turned out it was his kid. She was bilking him out of a lot of money. To be able to keep the kid there he was giving her a couple thousand a month. That's why he wanted to get her bumped off, I guess."

THE GOLDEN MOMENT

Detectives always pray for that one golden phone call that will provide the critical break in a case. Ito and Eguchi, who attempt to remain poker-faced and conceal their excitement, realize they have just received that call.

McLarty tells the cops that at the restaurant he and Blake "just met and had some small talk about movies. I thought he wanted me to do a stunt-coordinating job or double or something, but it turned out he wanted me to kill his wife." McLarty sounds incredulous.

"How'd he say he wanted you to do that?" Ito asks.

"I really can't tell you word-for-word. I just know that in the conversation that's what it finally boiled down to."

"At the restaurant did he mention something about killing his wife?"

"No. I think he wanted to get me to the house and show me what a bad person she was.... Oh, man," he says breathlessly, "like reality was overwhelming, to say the least."

McLarty tells them that after bringing him to the back house, Blake took him inside and showed him stacks of the letters Bakley had sent to lonely men across the country.

Ito again asks him to recall exactly how Blake proposed he kill Bakley.

"He showed me where she slept and insinuated someone could sneak in here at night, slide open the door and sneak up there and pop her."

"Did he say 'pop her'?"

"Something to that effect."

The afternoon of the meeting, McLarty tells detectives, Blake then drove him back to the restaurant where his car was parked and said, "You want to call me?"

"You call me," McLarty told Blake. Then he asked, "And what are you really talking about anyway, moneywise?"

"How does $10,000 sound?" Blake replied.

About a week later, Blake called McLarty, who told him, "I don't want to have anything to do with this thing at all."

"Why?" Blake asked.

"Well, number one, I don't want to do anything like that. And the other one is your notoriety."

Blake abruptly ended the conversation.

When McLarty heard on the news that Bakley had been killed, he knew he should have contacted police earlier. "But I let it go and I let it go and I let it go. Finally I said, 'I can't let it go any further.'"

"Did he ever come out with the exact words of him wanting you to kill his wife?" Ito asks.

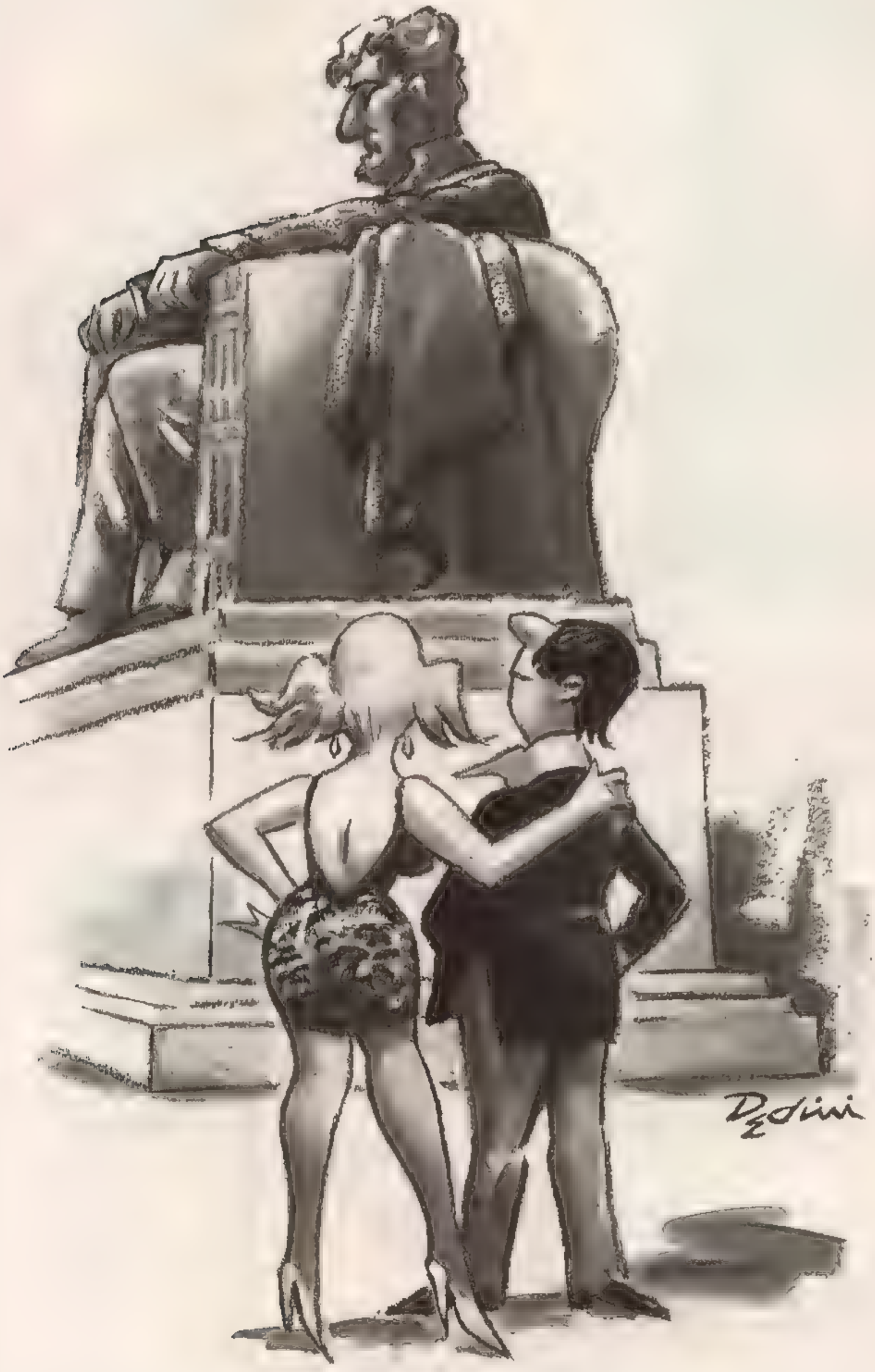
"More like...'You walk over and pop her.'"

"That's what he said?"

"Yes."

After the interview, as the detectives head back downtown, Eguchi and Ito exchange a high five. "We have to do a lot of work to check out his story, to confirm what he's saying," says Ito. "But there's no doubt that this is a big break."

The next day, in the early evening, as Ito and Eguchi type up witness statements, detectives Rich Haro and Adrian Soler call from the desert to describe



"I got laid in a Lincoln once."

their interview with a handyman who has information about the Bakley murder. A few days after the murder, a stuntman named Ronald Hambleton confided to the handyman that Blake had asked him to kill Bakley. Hambleton told the handyman, who once worked for him, that he had met Blake at Du-Par's about a month before the murder. Later Blake drove Hambleton back to his house and offered him $100,000 to kill Bakley, the handyman said.

Haro and Soler then interviewed Hambleton, who acknowledged that Snuffy had contacted him and set up a meeting with Blake at Du-Par's about a month ago. But he said the meeting was about a movie project, and he denied that Blake had ever mentioned the murder.

In the morning the detectives and Hartwell meet with Haro and Soler in the captain's office to hear more about the interviews. "Both the informant and Hambleton say the same thing about the meeting at Du-Par's and how it was arranged," Soler says. "The only discrepancy is regarding the solicitation by Blake."

"You have a good feeling about this informant?" Ito asks.

"Yes," Soler says, "especially after hearing what McLarty said."

Ito shakes Soler's and Haro's hands and says, "That's good shit."

"The timeline's perfect," Hartwell says.

PART IV: PROSECUTION
THIS IS HOLLYWOOD

The investigation now picks up steam. Detectives Knolls and McCartin spend four days on the East Coast and in the South, interviewing Bakley's friends and family. They collect stories of threats and intrigue. After being briefed, Ito and Eguchi head to the Mojave Desert to check out the story of stuntman Hambleton, who denies the informant's tale that Blake had asked him to kill his wife.

The deputy district attorney assigned to the Blake case is Greg Dohi, who is half Japanese, which inspires more kidding by the other detectives. Late in the morning of Tuesday, May 25, Dohi stops by to confer with Ito and Eguchi. Ito stands up, gives him a mock bow and grunts, "Dohi-san."

Exactly one month after the Bakley murder Ito and Eguchi greet a new partner, Detective Brian Tyndall. Tyndall is 53 and with his shaved head looks like an Irish Telly Savalas. Almost three years ago he was working in RHD's bank robbery section when he was assigned to an LAPD task force investigating the Rampart scandal. Ito, who had just learned that the task force was breaking up, asked Tatreau if Tyndall could be assigned to the Blake case. Ito knows that Eguchi, who recently passed the detective exam, will eventually be shipped out to another division.

A few days later, on an overcast June morning, Ito, Tyndall and Eguchi, along

with Hartwell and Tatreau, walk a few blocks to the Criminal Court Building, take the elevator to the 18th floor and meet with several lawyers from the district attorney's office in their conference room. Ito details the investigation, from the night Blake and Bakley met to her pregnancy and their custody battle to her murder and to the interviews with the retired stuntmen.

After a few of the deputy DAs and their supervisors pepper him with questions, Ito says, "You know what's interesting? During his interview with the North Hollywood detectives Blake never asks what happened to her—did she get shot, stabbed, beat with a baseball bat or whatever."

Ito explains that he believes Blake shot Bakley, coated the gun with oil to eliminate fingerprints and then tossed it in the Dumpster. He is still trying to trace the provenance of the gun.

The prosecutor asks Ito whether he thinks a hit man Blake hired could have shot Bakley and dumped the gun.

"That's kind of Hollywood," Ito says.

"This is Hollywood," the prosecutor retorts. Everyone laughs.

Ito shakes his head and says, "A third party wouldn't dump it."

"Why not?" the prosecutor asks.

"I've been working murders 18 years, and I've never seen a contract killer dump a gun at the scene."

Another prosecutor says the McLarty solicitation is a break but that the key to the case is persuading Hambleton to talk.

Ito mentions that Hambleton is facing a misdemeanor weapons charge in San Bernardino County for brandishing a rifle at sheriff's deputies at the edge of his property.

"A misdemeanor's not much leverage," a prosecutor says.

When the meeting concludes they walk back to Parker Center, and Hartwell tells Ito, "What remains from the meeting is how much still needs to be done."

Ito adds a number of items to his to-do list, including interviewing the nanny, checking to see whether Blake usually parks in the lot at Vitello's, interviewing other stuntmen, reinterviewing Snuffy and Hambleton, obtaining Hambleton's phone records, checking on whether any of Blake's acquaintances recognize the murder weapon and attempting to determine why no neighbors heard the shots.

Ito is discouraged. Although he has built the framework, there is still much work to do before the investigation is complete. An avid golfer, he has not been able to play since Bakley's murder. Every weekend he has either worked or been too tired to drive to the golf course. Usually in June the days are long enough so that he can play 18 holes before dark. Now, he complains to Eguchi, he does not know when he will swing his clubs again.

Ito, Eguchi and Tyndall spend the next few weeks attempting to track down a dozen stuntmen who once worked with Blake. Most of them know one another, and the detectives soon gain insight, they believe, into why Blake contacted McLarty and Hambleton. Each man has had trouble with the law, is in financial trouble or is seriously ill. Ito, armed with this information, attempts to reinterview Snuffy, who was Blake's contact for the stuntmen, but is rebuffed.

A few days later the detectives brief Deputy District Attorney Dohi, who has been spending more and more time in the squad room conferring with the detectives. They meet in one of the small windowless interview rooms, which is sweltering. During frigid winter mornings the air conditioner in the squad room often blasts cold air. Now on a hot June afternoon heat emanates from the vents. Ito tugs on his collar and says, "Let's cut to the chase. Blake either fired a gun or was in an area where a gun was fired."

"So we have GSR particles?" Dohi asks.

Ito nods and tells him gunshot residue was found on Blake's clothing. And Ito recently received a positive result from the GSR test on Blake's hands—but, he explains, the criminalist hedged a bit, writing in his report that "if Mr. Blake is in the environment of firearms, i.e. handles firearms on a regular basis, then these results could be the result of contact."

Frowning and crossing his arms, Ito tells Dohi that the detective in charge of Blake's clothes left them boxed up in the trunk of his car all night instead of booking them into evidence that evening.

They are all aware of how a defense attorney can spin this information into a massive web of police conspiracy. "Uh-oh," Dohi says. "Any guns in the trunk?"

"I don't think so," Ito says.

"We're going to need a statement from him about what he keeps in the trunk and have the area checked for GSR."

"We'll swab the area," Ito says.

Dohi shakes his head and says weakly, "It is what it is."

But as Ito tells Dohi more about his interviews with the stuntmen, the attorney's mood brightens. Even with the clothing in the detective's trunk, Dohi

"I saw him on TV the other night. It was either on Leno or that program of people wanted by the FBI."

says, the GSR results are good news.

The next afternoon the detectives, armed with a search warrant, stop by Earle Caldwell's apartment. Ito is not hopeful that he will find anything important, but Dohi urges him to make the attempt anyway.

THE "KILL BONNY" LIST

Caldwell lives the life of the Hollywood fringe player. His studio is perched over a garage overlooking an alley in a modest Burbank neighborhood of nondescript apartment buildings. The detectives find $2,000 in cash inside, as well as two pistols and two shotguns. Caldwell tells them that he recently cashed his last paycheck and that he inherited the weapons from his father, who was a gunsmith. But then, from the bottom of a cup holder in Caldwell's car, beneath a few gas and food receipts, Eguchi pulls out a folded piece of yellow legal paper, torn in half, with a handwritten list: "2 shovels, small sledge, 25-auto, get blank gun ready, old rugs, duct tape—black, Draino [*sic*], pool acid, lye...." Eguchi also finds a World War II–era Mauser in a desiccated leather case in the car's center console. Caldwell claims this too was part of his father's collection.

The detectives are ecstatic. The list, they believe, implies that Caldwell intended to dispose of a body. And if he owns one vintage German pistol, maybe he was in possession of a Walther P-38, too.

In the morning Caldwell's attorney calls Ito and says that there is an innocent explanation for the list. Most of the items, which Caldwell never ended up purchasing, were for repairs at Blake's house; the lye was for the swimming pool.

After Ito hangs up, Tyndall says, "It looks to me like a 'Kill Bonny' list."

"I think we hit the jackpot," Eguchi agrees.

The next week Tyndall flies to the Bay Area, where Caldwell's wife lives (they are apparently separated). He confirms that Caldwell and his wife spent the evening of Bakley's murder with another couple.

The detectives are still attempting to determine why no neighbors heard the gunshot. They confer with a firearms expert at an LAPD gun range, who suggests several possibilities. Because the tip of the slug is somewhat flat and crimped at the edges, someone might have removed it with a "bullet-puller," he says, dumped out half the gunpowder and pounded the tip back on. The noise from the shot would have been muffled significantly. A simple handmade silencer, he tells the detectives, can also significantly cut the decibel level. Demonstrating, he cuts the top off a plastic water bottle and tapes it to the muzzle of a pistol. He aims toward a target surrounded by countless brass shell casings that glitter in the sunshine. When he fires, the sound is merely a dull thud.

On Friday afternoon, two days after the Fourth of July, Ito, Eguchi and Tyndall drive to the Hollywood Hills to interview Cody Blackwell, the woman who says she posed as Blake's nanny when Bakley was duped into handing over the baby. Blackwell has already sold her story to a tabloid, so the detectives have a general sense of her role in the drama.

"WHATEVER'S NECESSARY"

Blackwell lives in a small pink cottage, a rustic aerie grafted onto the side of a steep canyon overgrown with brush. The detectives have to climb more than 100 rickety wooden steps to reach her door. The morning is warm and unusually humid. July is typically hot and dry in Los Angeles—desert weather—but yesterday a muggy monsoon from northern Mexico, a wind-fed summer storm, blew into southern California, generating lightning and thundershowers.

When the detectives introduce themselves, Blackwell says, "I've been waiting for you guys to show up," and invites them inside. The cement floor is splashed with swirls of yellow, purple and blue paint, and plants hang from the ceiling. Beside her bed, yoga books and Indian statues are stacked on purple milk crates, and Native American drums, feathers and pictures of wolves line the walls. Blackwell, who is 60, has bright red hair and wears khaki shorts and a T-shirt. She sits on the side of her bed, her two enormous dogs—an Alaskan malamute and a wolf hybrid—growling at her feet. The detectives pull up chairs beside her.

She had once worked as Blake's personal assistant, she says, but had not talked to him for a while. In August he called, told her about his two-month-old baby, Rose, and said that the mother would be arriving in a week. He asked Blackwell if she would move into his house and temporarily play the role of nanny.

"I moved some stuff in...and he says, 'No. I want you to move your homey stuff in. Make it look like you've been living here.'"

Blackwell shopped with Blake, and he spent $900 on items for the baby, including a car seat, a stroller, diapers, bibs and toys. He then began vilifying Bakley. "She's the scum of the earth," he told Blackwell. "She's involved with drug dealers, racketeering, bikers and all these seedy people that rip people off. She's horrible. She's awful, and I can't stand her."

The way Bakley had duped Blake enraged him, she says. "He doesn't kiss anyone's ass. He's a total control freak. For him to have someone manipulate him must have sent him over the edge. Just up a tree. He said, 'I'll do whatever's necessary to get this baby.'"

Blake introduced her to a man he called Moose, who was wearing camouflage fatigues and combat boots. When she describes him, the detectives realize Moose is Caldwell.

Blake told Blackwell, "I want her to

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feel really secure with you watching the baby. We're going to tell her you're a nurse and your name is Nancy." She continues, "Then I started wondering. I said, 'Robert, this is really weird.'"

When he drove to the airport to pick up Bakley, Blackwell remained at the house and chatted with Moose, who told her, "I'm just here to make sure things don't get out of hand.... If things get wild and crazy I'm here to subdue her."

When Blake returned, Moose dropped to the ground, crawled to the toolshed and hid inside. Blackwell demonstrates by jumping off her bed and inching along the floor on her hands and knees. "I'm thinking, Oh my god! Oh my god! Then I saw her, and my mouth fell open. She didn't look exactly like I expected. Her hair was fried, like cotton candy. She was chubby, old. I was surprised. She didn't look like a woman he'd have a baby with. But she seemed nice."

Blake pulled Blackwell aside and said, "We're going to lunch. Moose is hiding. You take care of the baby." He then told Bakley, "It's okay. She's a nurse."

Fifteen minutes later Blake called Blackwell and said, "I want you to take the baby up to your house. Leave now!" She hugs one of her dogs and says, "That's when I started getting really scared. I didn't know what to do. I haven't been a mother in 30 or 40 years."

An hour later Blake called Blackwell at home and told her to meet him at a liquor store parking lot near his house. When she arrived she handed the baby to Blake, and he paid her $300. Blake rocked his daughter and whispered to her, "Well, kid, from here on out it's just you and me. Just the two of us." Blackwell tells the detectives, "I'm going, 'Oh my god! I've been involved in a kidnapping.' I'm freaking out." Blake then said to Blackwell, "Okay, you're coming with me." He instructed her to lie down in the back of the SUV and hold the baby while he drove. He stopped at a McDonald's in Calabasas and gave her $10 for a meal.

"I know he'd just bought his daughter a big house nearby. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know why we were there. He was taking the baby to his daughter's," she says.

An hour later Blake returned without the baby and said that Bakley "is out of the state. I don't have to worry about her." As he drove Blackwell back to Studio City so she could pick up her car, he ranted about what he would do if Bakley's friends returned for the baby. "Just let those motherfuckers come to my house," he told Blackwell. "I'm ready for them. Let 'em come over the fence. I'll shoot 'em like dogs and let the birds pick their bones."

"I thought I was in a B movie," Blackwell says. Back at home she panicked.

"Oh my god," she says, "now I'm an accomplice to a kidnapping." She cries, dabs her eyes with a tissue and asks the detectives, "Am I going to be in trouble? Am I going to be arrested?"

Ito shakes his head and says softly, "No."

Ito shows her a photograph of Caldwell, and she shouts, "That's Moose!"

Later, as the detectives stand up to leave, Ito asks her, "Why didn't his daughter have kids?"

"He mentioned his daughter and her boyfriend were trying to have a baby but weren't having any luck. And he was implying if anything happened that's where Rosie would go."

As the detectives head back down the canyon through the mist, Ito says, "She's the first person to confirm the angle about the daughter."

Tyndall taps the murder book and says, "Blake's shit just got a whole bunch weaker."

CODA

After nearly a full year of LAPD investigation, Robert Blake and his bodyguard Earle Caldwell were arrested and then charged on April 22, 2002, Blake with one count of murder with special circumstances, two counts of solicitation of murder and one count of murder conspiracy, which was later dismissed. A single count of murder conspiracy was filed against Caldwell, a charge that was also dismissed. The criminal complaint, filed by prosecutors, said Blake "personally and intentionally" fired the handgun that killed Bakley. Blake and Caldwell pleaded not guilty. Blake was denied bail and was led to jail. Prosecutors dropped the proposed death penalty, seeking instead a maximum sentence of life without parole for Blake. On February 26, 2003, against legal advice, the actor told his side of the story to Barbara Walters on national television. The next day, during a preliminary hearing, stuntman Gary McLarty testified that Blake had offered him $10,000 to kill his wife, Bonny Lee Bakley. Ronald Hambleton, the reluctant second stuntman, later confirmed that Blake also asked him to help kill Bakley.

On October 31 Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Darlene Schempp turned down Blake's final appeal for dismissal of the murder charge and scheduled the trial for early 2004. On February 9, 2004 jury selection is scheduled to begin in the case of The People of the State of California v. Robert Blake.

Dave Matthews

(continued from page 107)

10

PLAYBOY: Jay-Z recently said that one of his favorite songs is DMB's "Crush."

MATTHEWS: Are you kidding me? You have no idea how much joy you just brought me, because I love Jay-Z. I hear a genuine kindness and humor in his music. Jay-Z was sitting next to me at a club in Florida, and I didn't have the balls to go up and say, "Man, you're a badass." That's what a spineless prick I am. He was busy, you know. My friends and my wife were like, "Go and say hello," and I'm like, "No, he's busy having dinner. Leave the guy alone." And then after he left I was like, "I'm a dickhead."

11

PLAYBOY: Your band has always been very supportive of people taping your live shows. Do you look at everyone losing their mind about downloading and file sharing and think, What's the big deal?

MATTHEWS: I could give less than a shit about it. I figure there's a war going on—even though some people think it's over—and *that's* something to worry about. There are hungry people in the world, and that's something to worry about. But whether the flood of technology makes us change the way musicians make money? That's just what happens.

12

PLAYBOY: Executives at your record label probably don't feel that way.

MATTHEWS: It's not like the record industry is some ancient thing that we have to save. It's a leaf in the wind in some ways. Some of the pensions might get screwed with, but I can always go play in a bar, if they'll have me. Of course I understand the panic of the record companies. I just don't really give that much of a shit.

13

PLAYBOY: Did you study the Grateful Dead playbook and mimic that relationship with fans as a strategy?

MATTHEWS: I think my manager may have been thinking that—let people tape it; let people spread the word that way—because he was more switched on to the Dead than we were. Nobody in the band ever really listened to the Dead. Since the band has been together, people have played a lot of the Dead around us. I do think that, especially early on, Jerry Garcia was a phenomenal songwriter and guitarist. And I'm leaving it there.

14

PLAYBOY: Are there times when you just get bored mid-jam?

MATTHEWS: I don't get bored. I get angry with myself because I feel like I'm fucking up. I get mad when I have to take a guitar solo. I sort of have fun, but it's like

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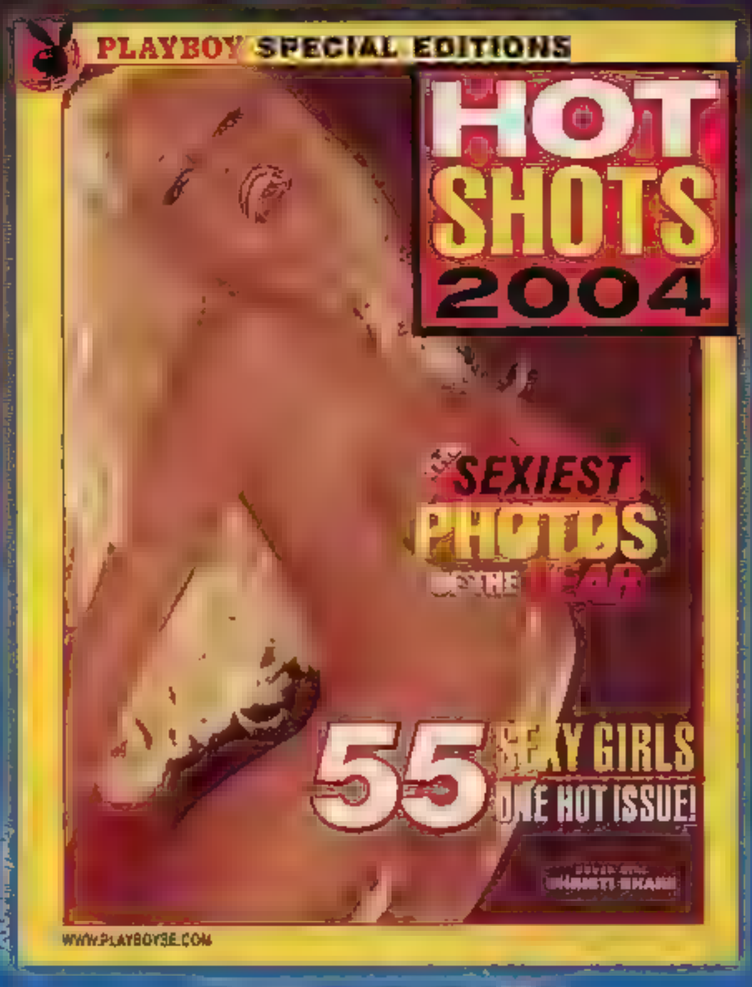

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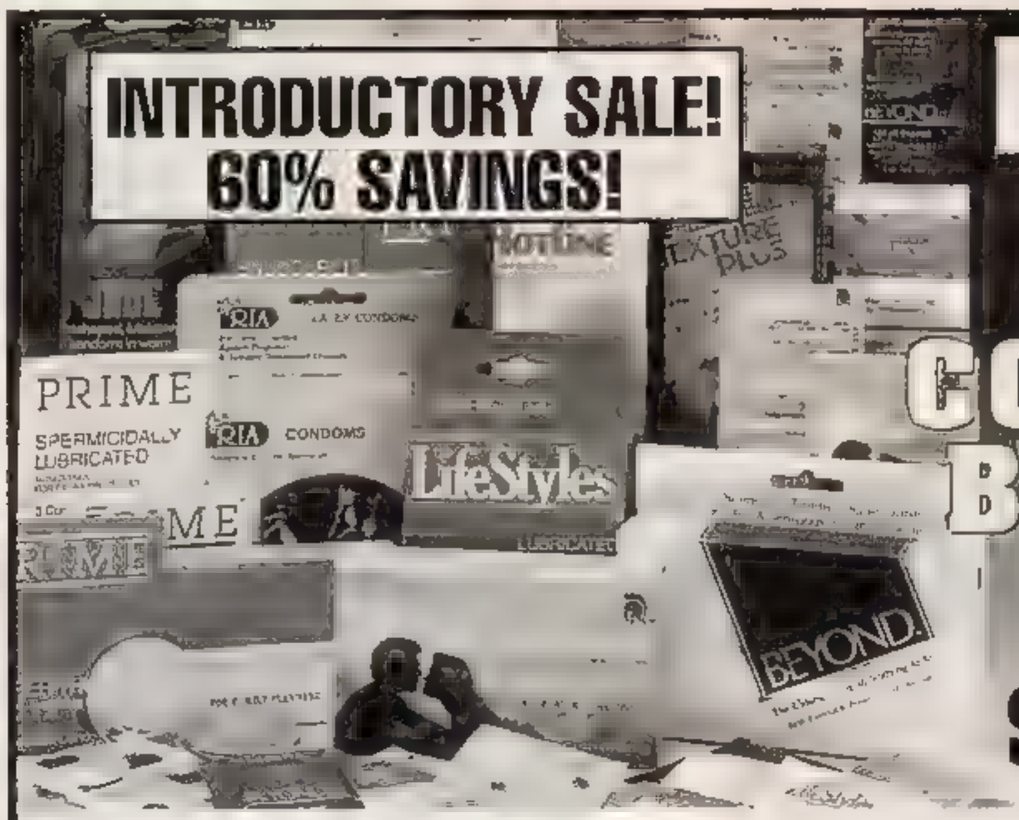

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a desperate search. I'm just so incompetent in so many ways on guitar that it's astounding that Gibson awarded me as a great acoustic guitarist. I'm unusual. I'm sort of inside out, ass backwards. The pressure of the guitar solo is like death laying its hands on my shoulders every time I step out. So I get mad and just thrash away like Bamm-Bamm from *The Flintstones*—although he played the drums—and get away with what I can. But I think I can speak for the band and say we're never, ever bored. Frustrated, angry, afraid, bitter, pissed off, mad at each other, mad at ourselves but never, ever bored.

15

PLAYBOY: You used to tend bar in Charlottesville, Virginia. Are you good at making exotic cocktails?
MATTHEWS: No. In fact, if a UVA student came in and said, "Can I get five B-52s?" I'd say no. And they'd say, "What do you mean? Can you make one?" And I'd say, "Probably I could make one, but I'm not going to. I'll give you a shot of tequila. I'll even give you the ingredients for a B-52 and five glasses. But if you're expecting it to be layered, you've come to the wrong place." I was very polite about it, but I was just too embarrassed to attempt it while someone else is going, "Can I get a whiskey?" and I'd have to be like, "I'm just trying to layer this B-52 over here. Hold on a second."

16

PLAYBOY: Don't bartenders get all the chicks?
MATTHEWS: I had long hair and I dressed really badly, which I continue to do—I just don't have the long hair. But I couldn't get the time of day when I bartended. Occasionally a girl gave me the time of day, which in a way is a good thing, because you know you're getting it for your personality, your charm alone, if you're the bartender. But I did love bartending—in that place, probably not anywhere else. I liked making people really drunk, getting them really shit-faced. "Are you driving tonight? No? Well, you are going to get fucked-up. You're walking out of here unconscious."

17

PLAYBOY: You have twin daughters. How did your kids most change your life?
MATTHEWS: I watched my wife give birth to the twins, and that was the most eye-opening experience of my life. I watched a fella get a knife in the side of his head once in South Africa, and I thought the sound and the power of that event was something I would never witness again. And that was nothing next to this. Everyone says this, but it gave me perspective on things. I was interested in seeing what my opinions of the world would be, whether I would become more conservative or the world would become more palatable when I became a father. In fact, it's become less palatable. Before, speaking out was just something of an arrogance, but here's the reason I have to say what I think, because I worry about my daughters. It makes me much more concerned about the world, because when I leave, I don't want to leave a shit stain behind.

18

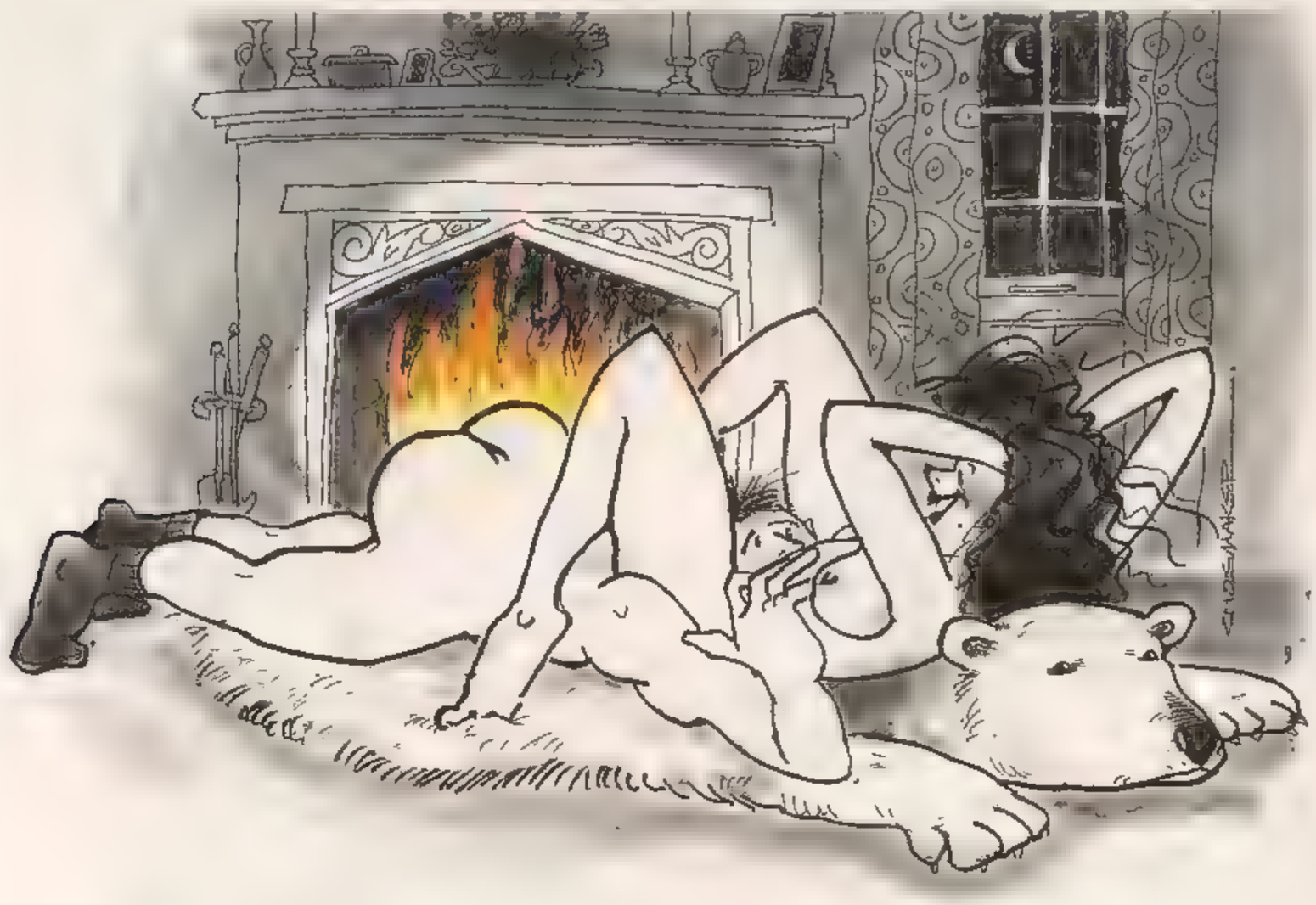
PLAYBOY: The majority of your band is black. You spent part of your childhood in South Africa. Do you have an enhanced understanding of diversity?
MATTHEWS: I have to be careful how I say this. The importance of our cultural differences in the band is something that the world has imposed on us. The band is one of the few places—and I intentionally refer to it as a place—that I've ever been where we discuss our differences openly, and it has been an enormous inspiration in my life. We talk about it, from very serious conversations to very humorous conversations. There's an honesty that I can have with these guys that I don't think I would have ever had if I hadn't met them and hung out with them. I've learned more about American culture from this band than I ever would have learned had I gotten together with a bunch of high school buddies. I feel truly blessed to be in this band. I'm really fucking lucky.

19

PLAYBOY: How did your family inform your beliefs?
MATTHEWS: My mother raised us to acknowledge the stupidity of racism and hatred and that peace is unattainable if you give validity to any kind of bigotry. The interesting thing for me growing up in South Africa was that when I came back to America, I saw prejudice all over the place. Racism is a thriving disease in this country. If our leaders believe it's even nearly done, they're delusional. Affirmative action hasn't scraped the surface, and to talk about removing that concept is moronic. Words like *freedom* are bandied about and waved on flags less delicately than they should be. Freedom is something you aspire to, not something you own. I'm proud to be an American, but it doesn't mean that I'm not disgusted by American behavior. There are bars in England with more wisdom and longer histories than America has. Go get a pint at a place that's five times as old as America: "I'd like a really fucking old beer, please." Hey, I've got a 20 questions joke. Can I tell it?

20

PLAYBOY: Sure. Take us out with a joke.
MATTHEWS: There's two fellas way out in the woods in Virginia. The name of one is Cecil. It's not important what the other one's name is. They're bored, just trying to kill time while they whittle. The more talkative fella, he says to Cecil, "Have you ever heard of the game 20 questions?" And Cecil says, "Nope." "Well, the way you play is, I think of something, write it down and put it in my pocket, and then you ask me 20 questions and gotta guess what it is. You wanna play?" So Cecil says, "Yeah, I reckon." So the other fella writes down "donkey dick" on a piece of paper, puts it in his pocket and says, "Now you got 20 questions to figure it out." Cecil says, "Can you eat it?" The first fella says, "Hmm, yeah, I reckon you can eat it." And Cecil says, "Well, is it donkey dick?"



"Move up, Charlie…You're eating the rug…."

SUTHERLAND

(continued from page 58)

where I've gotten my ass kicked, and I've never felt bad about that. But when I've won a fight, I've felt that the other person didn't deserve what he got.

PLAYBOY: Do you remember the first time you got your ass kicked?

SUTHERLAND: I was with a guy named Greg from Toronto. We were 15 and in downtown Toronto trying to buy pot—unsuccessfully, which is why it wasn't until I was 18 and in New York that I actually experienced it. We were in a mall. I had my first drink, and we tried to buy pot from this 20-year-old guy. My friend looked at it and said that it wasn't pot, it was catnip. I said to the guy, "This isn't real. I want my money back." The guy said, "Fuck off, kid." So I pulled out this switchblade that a friend of mine had given to me, flicked it open and said, "Don't fuck with me. Give me my money back!" And it worked. The guy went to give me the money, and I had never had that happen before, so I went, "Who the fuck do you think you are?" and kept talking until I slurred some words and the guy realized I'd had something to drink. I never saw him punch me. Next thing I know I'm waking up. I was knocked out, and my friend was stabbed in the leg with my knife. The guy kicked the shit out of both of us, and I don't remember a single thing. We had to ride home on the subway. My eye was five times its normal size. My friend was holding his leg; his pants were soaked in blood. We went to my place, stole one of my sister's maxi pads and some hockey tape and taped him up. We had gotten our asses kicked, and the only thing I could say was, "I've got to learn to punch like that! That was good." I've always had a very different reaction to such situations.

PLAYBOY: How many tattoos do you have, and what do they mean?

SUTHERLAND: Tattoos are my map. I won't need anyone to speak at my funeral; you'll just have to look at my arms. I have six. The latest one—Our Lady of Guadalupe—represents my neighborhood; it's very Hispanic. It plays a prominent role in *24*. The first one was a Japanese symbol that means strength. Another is a sword. One is a Maori band of life I got in New Zealand. Then I have my family's Scottish crest. And an ivy thistle.

PLAYBOY: You're still doing movies. What was it like working with Angelina Jolie in *Taking Lives*?

SUTHERLAND: She was focused, committed, on time and knew her shit. I asked Angelina, "What on earth were you doing in Cambodia?" She said, "I was making a picture there. I stayed in this village after the film was done. I would wake up, and down the road someone needed to put in an irrigation pipe for a hut. The next day someone was building a retaining wall. The next, someone needed work on a roof. After a while I felt like I was useful." It was so beautifully put. I sat back, my jaw dropped, and I thought, I want to go to Cambodia. I felt so useless. What a beautiful person she was to have figured that out, to have thought about it and then to have done something about it.

PLAYBOY: Does she remind you of your mother, who is a noted activist?

SUTHERLAND: My mother has spent the past seven years going back and forth across Canada showing Canadians how 12 years of conservative politics is stripping them of their health care system. She was instrumental in getting the first liberal Ontario government in a very long time. She's very smart, very committed and a very tough lady. She was recently awarded the Order of Canada, the highest honor you can receive, and I wore a kilt to that. My mother's five-foot-two, and I'll be honest with you—she's the only person I'm scared of.

PLAYBOY: Her father, Thomas Clement Douglas, was a significant figure in Canadian politics.

SUTHERLAND: He was leader of the New Democratic Party. First he was premier of Saskatchewan, where he implemented a socialized health care system that was later adopted on a federal level.

PLAYBOY: Did you grow up with an appreciation of his socialist point of view?

SUTHERLAND: I have a belief that we're responsible for helping each other.

PLAYBOY: Have you maintained your Canadian citizenship?

SUTHERLAND: Yes.

PLAYBOY: What's the difference between Canada and the U.S.?

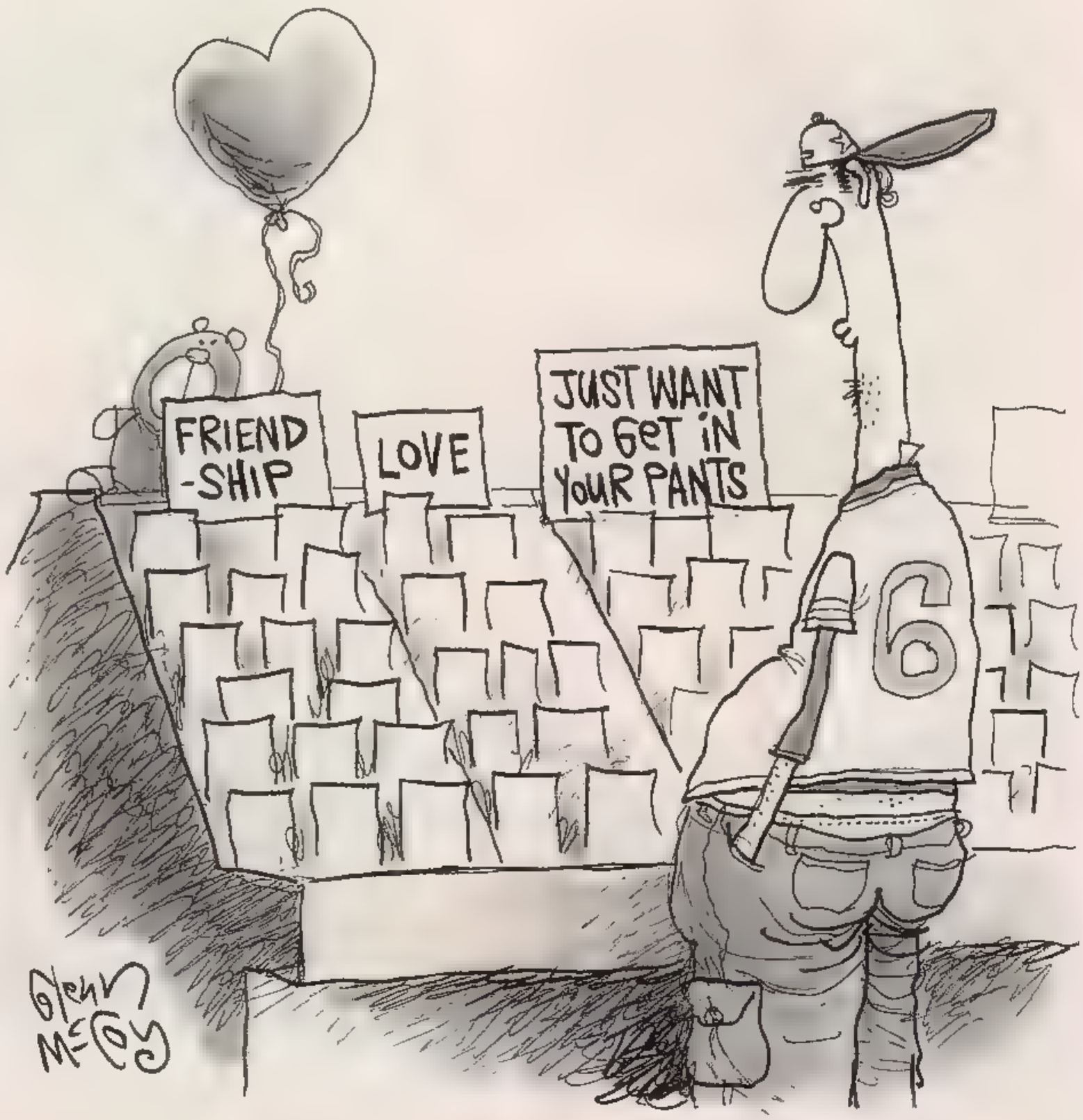
SUTHERLAND: The simple answer is we have 10 percent of your population on almost a quarter more landmass. It takes all of us to make that country run. It doesn't take all of you to make your country run, so people are getting left out. That changes your whole sensibility about everything.

PLAYBOY: And yet with all that room to roam, you couldn't find a high school that was compatible with your ideas. Were you kicked out of boarding school before your 16th birthday?

SUTHERLAND: I was asked to leave. I didn't maintain my grades. I went from one school to another with the hope of landing in a place where I would do well, in an environment that would help me. So I ended up in this place where I just did not want to go.

PLAYBOY: Was that St. Andrews College?

SUTHERLAND: No, I liked St. Andrews, but I screwed up there. This was right after, which was the end of my scholastic career. A place called Venta, just outside Ottawa. It was a real last resort. My



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Page 159: **Liquor:** *Glenmorangie Scotch,* 800-456-8946, ext. 120. *Ikon True Russian Vodka,* ikonvodka.net. *Miller's Reformed London Dry Gin,* 877-HAVE-GIN or millersgin.com. *Pappy Van Winkle Family Reserve Bourbon,* oldvanwinkle.com. *Santa Teresa 1796 Ron Antiguo de Solera,* santateresausa.com. **Electronics:** *DirecTV,* directv.com. *Pioneer,* 800-PIONEER or pioneerelectronics.com. *Sony,* sony.com. **Great pig-out food** (not shown): *Popcorn and chocolate-covered pretzels,* popcornpalace.com. *Potato chips, dips and pretzels,* chipofthemonth.com. *Beef jerky,* bigjohnsbeefjerky.com.

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Page 163: *Absinthe,* for more information, pick up a copy of *Absinthe: Sip of Seduction* by Betina Wittels and Robert Hermesch, from Corvus Publishing, corvuspublishing.com.

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mother said that if I didn't go to that school they might as well send me to the penitentiary and save the taxpayers some dollars.

PLAYBOY: But you didn't stay.

SUTHERLAND: Well, I knew that I wasn't going to stay there. I had plan B—to leave that school and make it via Montreal back to Toronto and try to enroll in a public school. Which I did.

PLAYBOY: Were you old enough to do that without parental consent?

SUTHERLAND: I had to hang out for a while. I left when I was 15, around October, and then I had to disappear for two months until I turned 16, when I was emancipated. At 16 I could do whatever I wanted.

PLAYBOY: So what was going on after you left Venta and disappeared? What were your parents doing about you?

SUTHERLAND: They were horrified. I knew that if I didn't call my mom I'd be dead. Within a couple of days I also called my dad, who was really cool. Both were cool, given the circumstances. If this had happened to me as a parent, I'd have throttled my child. My dad offered to fly me down to Los Angeles for a talk.

PLAYBOY: And what did you tell your dad when you went to L.A.?

SUTHERLAND: I said I wanted to try acting. I had done Equity theater before. I had worked with my brother, who was an actor at the time. I said to my dad, "I will go to a regular school and treat it as a job if you let me try to get an agent and do auditions."

PLAYBOY: Both your parents act. Did they start when they were in their mid-teens as well?

SUTHERLAND: No, much older. They both had university degrees—my father in engineering. My mother went to England to study. My father didn't start acting until he was in his 30s. What my father did was give me $400 a month. I went back to Toronto to go to school and to act. I got an agent thanks to my mother—though I didn't realize that at the time—and he started sending me out on auditions. Within a year Dan Petrie, who had directed *Fort Apache, the Bronx* and *Raisin in the Sun,* came back to Canada to make his story. He was from the Maritime Provinces and had written a script called *The Bay Boy,* about a young boy during the Depression who witnesses a murder in a very small Maritime town. It was a touching, simple story and a huge opportunity for any young actor in Canada. I got the lead.

PLAYBOY: Were you paid enough to show that you could make a living?

SUTHERLAND: I got $30,000 Canadian, around $22,000 U.S. I thought I could retire on it. It was a lot of money. It lasted a year. It helped me get my girlfriend into Circle in the Square Theatre School and helped us support an apartment in New York for another year after that.

PLAYBOY: How was the movie received?

SUTHERLAND: It won 11 out of 14 Academy Awards in Canada. I was nominated for best actor.

PLAYBOY: Not long after that, you drove out to L.A. with your girlfriend and wound up living in your car for three weeks. Couldn't you afford a room?

SUTHERLAND: I had done a Levi's print ad in New York, and it allowed me to get that car and a cashier's check for $2,700, which my girlfriend lost. So we had no money. We stayed in the car by the beach so we could use the outdoor showers. I got a job really fast. Steven Spielberg hired me to do an episode of *Amazing Stories* that he directed.

PLAYBOY: How big a deal was working for Spielberg?

SUTHERLAND: Huge. All you had to do was go into your next meeting and say you were doing something with Spielberg and you got the job. It was more valuable before the episode came out. Then Sean Penn hired me for *At Close Range*. Then I did *Stand By Me*. I never stopped working.

PLAYBOY: When did you finally move out of the car?

SUTHERLAND: Around 1986 I ended up living with Robert Downey Jr. and Sarah Jessica Parker. We lived above Charlie Chaplin's coach house—very prophetic for Bobby, who went on to play Chaplin. There were five of us, with Billy Zane and another actor, Tom O'Brien. Billy Zane was how I met everybody; we had done a TV movie called *Brotherhood of Justice*, which wasn't very good. When we got back to L.A. I started hanging out at their place and finally ended up living there. It was like *Melrose Place*. We were 18, 19 years old, all doing stuff people told us we would never be able to do. Bobby was gone most of that time because he was doing *Saturday Night Live*. And Sarah was working too. I was there for two and a half years.

PLAYBOY: Were you paying rent?

SUTHERLAND: They never asked.

PLAYBOY: So you lived free for two and a half years?

SUTHERLAND: They had an extra bedroom, and I was gone so often it was really just a place for me to keep my stuff. Sarah had a cat, which we had to look after when she was gone.

PLAYBOY: When Downey started having his problems later on, were you still in touch?

SUTHERLAND: We've drifted apart, but I care a lot about him. He's one of the most talented people I've ever known. The worst thing you can say about a few of us, myself included, is that we didn't fully grow up. There's a wonderful childlike quality about Bobby that I hope he still has, because it's part of his magic as an artist. I don't use that word lightly. I don't call myself an artist. Bobby is.

PLAYBOY: Who else among your peers do you consider an artist?

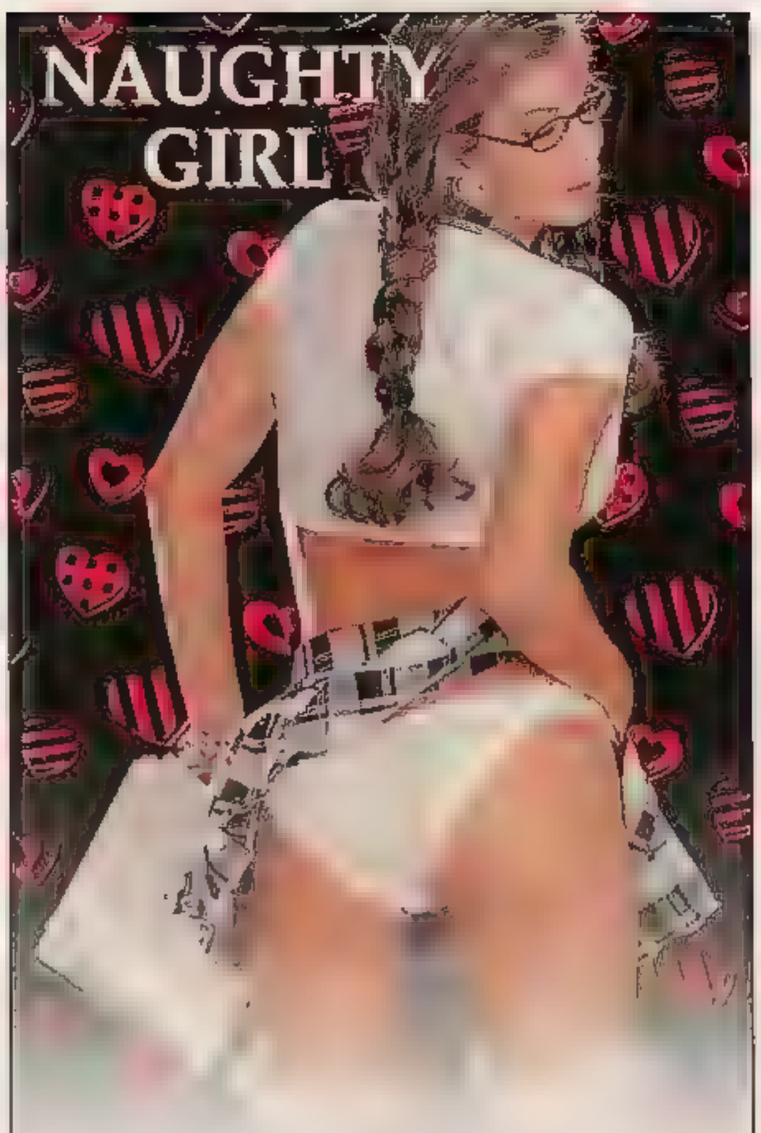
SUTHERLAND: Sean Penn. He's the reason I came down here initially. Penn and Tim Hutton did some work in *Taps* that just opened the floodgates for the rest of us. Before that you had people who were older, like John Travolta, doing *Grease*. Then all of a sudden Sean Penn does *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. It's got some great funny moments but serious ones, too; Jennifer Jason Leigh gets date-raped in the dugout. Penn was brilliant in that. About the same time, he does *Taps*, which is 180 degrees on the other side, and he's absolutely brilliant in that. That moment when he's carrying Tim Hutton out of the building is astonishing. As a young actor I wanted to be as good as those guys, Sean specifically, because I related to him so much on a physical level. I was impressed not only with his effort but with his consistency. When we did *At Close Range*, normally we would chat beforehand, but I noticed that he was really quiet one day. I asked him later about it, and he said he used to always be excited on a set, hanging out and talking to everybody, but by the time he did his scene he had no energy. He learned that on specific days he should stay by himself so every ounce of energy he had would be put into the work. I thought that was smart and learned from it.

PLAYBOY: What about working with Jack Nicholson in *A Few Good Men*?

SUTHERLAND: Nicholson did that courtroom scene in five takes and all in one pass. Every take was different. They were all outstanding. As a snotty young actor I thought, Jack Nicholson plays Jack Nicholson. Which is such a stupid thing to say. I watched how hard Jack Nicholson works to be Jack Nicholson. I loved the fact that he walked onto the set, sat in the chair, turned around, the camera started rolling, and he was all about business. When he finished and walked out, everybody went, "Holy shit, did you see that?" and talked about it for days.

PLAYBOY: You said that you aren't an artist. Is there any art in being part of a show like *24*?

SUTHERLAND: After September 11, when we were watching firefighters, cops, construction workers, doctors, emergency workers in the rescue effort, it seemed like they all had a purpose. And then what do I do? I act for a living. I walked around asking myself, What have I done with my life? I felt useless for a week, staying at a hotel because I was still living in Canada. We had aired four episodes, and I thought it was so stupid. A guy came up to me and said, "Hey, man, I saw your show. It looks awesome." I thought, How on earth can he talk about that at a time like this? And then it hit me: Anything that could get us out of the way we were feeling was helpful, even if it was just for an hour. Just to give our brains a break. I'm fine with that.



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HAVANA

(continued from page 120)

past the security checkpoint at the entrance to the marina, the blue-uniformed guards saluting the jeep and then quickly chopping their forearms again for the Mercedes. Then they were speeding down a boulevard canopied by huge ficus trees, through the formerly glamorous neighborhood of Miramar, the elegant old mansions divided into offices and apartments or simply boarded up like the Soviet embassy. Then the Mercedes turned inland onto a short freeway through a more modern version of Miramar, equally grand but less colonial, past the construction site for a new convention center, through a buffer zone of jungle and then out a long, dusty strip of warehouses and industrial sites, past the airport and into the flat countryside until they were approaching what seemed even from a distance to be a military base. Payne slumped in the leather seat, the Cuba libre from the marina still clutched in his hand, dismayed that he had been swept up into whatever was happening.

"When are you going to tell me what's going on?"

"There is a justice that must be witnessed by an international observer."

"What's that have to do with me?"

"You are a journalist, no?"

"That would be a loose interpretation of what I am."

"Our chief was given a list from our agency," Diaz shrugged. "He selected you."

"He selected *me*." Payne couldn't stop himself from just letting go with a snort. "Why would he choose me? Who is your fucking chief?"

"*Hombre,*" the official laughed. "The fucking president, who else? Fidel."

The capricious nonsense of his anointment stunned Elliott Payne, the absurdity so pressurized it felt like a dark formless thing trapped in the car with them.

"Fidel selected me for what?"

Diaz sighed heavily. "An unfortunate business, I am sorry to tell you. You are to witness an execution."

For some minutes Payne didn't say anything, because he wasn't thinking anything. His brain had stopped, and all he felt was something in his stomach like a large stone; he wanted to stand in a cold shower and brush his teeth and get on with the day. They drove through the gate of the base, down a one-lane macadam road lined with royal palm trees, the inviting green lawns on either side of the drive eerily deserted, and parked in a roundabout in front of a barracks or possibly an administrative center built during a past century, a colonnaded portico running the length of the grand structure, tall windows with deep casements in the thick concrete of the ochre-colored walls, a barn-red tin roof streaked with rust.

"That's fucked-up," Payne finally said, almost in a whisper, almost out of breath.

"I agree with you."

"Look. *Listen!* I don't want to," said Elliott Payne, but his protest sounded childish, and even as the words left his mouth he knew, without understanding why, that he did.

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The affair proceeded with astonishing informality, an atmosphere to which Elliott Payne contributed with his own appearance, his nylon fishing shorts and deck shoes and rumpled short-sleeve linen shirt, his scuffed and water-stained pigskin shoulder bag, his polarized sunglasses and, most of all, in his hand the complimentary drink in its plastic cup, which he had neither finished nor thrown away, as if he were breezing around town, some fun guy joining the party. Diaz and Payne marched through an arched breezeway dividing the building in half, the quartet of soldiers from the jeep straggling behind, rifles slung over their shoulders or carried carelessly with the barrels down. On the back side of the building was a parade ground, the grass worn and patchy. At one end of the field sat a cube of concrete, a windowless building like a cake box, perhaps a former armory, the same mustard color you saw so often on old government buildings in the tropics, and it was to this building's large wooden door, guarded by a sentry with a face frozen by apathy, that the two men and their escort walked without speaking. There was a swirl of buzzards pinwheeling in the sky above them, but there were always buzzards in the sky in Cuba, and the writer found no portent in them. Diaz said something to the sentry, who opened the door, and they stepped inside and the sentry closed the door behind them, its sound vibrating in the shadows of a large single room softly illuminated by a pair of grime-streaked skylights on the high roof, the four walls thinly painted a wash of Mediterranean blue. Near the wall opposite the door was a long table, and near one end of the table, sitting on plain wooden chairs, were four military officers in dress uniforms, high-ranking as far as Payne could guess from their rows of ribbons and medals, although he was unfamiliar with the insignia. The men were laughing, their laughter warm and rich and effusive as the door swung open, their hats on the table, each man cradling a demitasse of coffee in his palms like a small flame he meant to keep from blowing out, and near at hand were water glasses and a corked and unlabeled bottle of liquor.

The laughing withered but not the incongruity of it. The officers sipped from their cups and turned their heads slowly

toward the visitors. Elliott had the good sense to remove his sunglasses and let his eyes adjust to the dimness of the room. He inhaled the dampness of the ancient concrete and felt oddly soothed by its pungency.

"My friend, do us the honor of having a drink with us on this day." The speaker addressed Payne in perfect English, unaccented to his Southern ear. The man to this man's right, a mulatto, interrupted, barking in Spanish at Diaz, who began to protest but thought better of it and withdrew sourly back through the door to wait outside. "Come and sit here at the table."

"You're American."

"Cuban-born. I lived in the States—Daytona, then New Orleans—for a few years. Know thine enemy." It was unmistakable in this speaker's voice—so much pleasure in his hatred for America, how could he ever give it up?

"Thine or thy or thou—can you tell me which is correct, Señor?" By age the most senior officer, thin and white-haired and imperturbable, this man spoke English in an accent so thick Elliott Payne found him difficult to understand, but he looked at the writer with gray eyes that were penetrating but not unkind and an intimate smile as if they had already met, as if perhaps the guy even liked him.

"I don't know," said Payne, taking an empty seat at the table across from him. "Nobody talks like that anymore."

"Ah. Of course."

There were two generals—courtly, white-haired Rivera and beefy General Ocampo, a huge black man bursting the seams of his overstarched uniform, who spoke no English and had eyes like hard-boiled eggs sunk in the jolly pudding of his face—and two colonels—the stern, poker-faced mulatto who had ordered Diaz from the room and who remained unintroduced (or rather nameless, acknowledging the writer with an icy nod and appraising him without mercy), and the other, Colonel Roberto Fernandez, whose fluent American English retained the vestige of a Southern drawl. "Call me Bobby," he told Payne. Unlike the others, he stood to shake his hand good-naturedly, no taller than the Napoleonic Doc Billy but broad-shouldered and narrow-hipped and athletic, gentle curls of brown hair receding from the center of his high forehead in the horseshoe shape of the laurels that once adorned Roman senators. He had a magnetic and boyish but slightly cruel smile that Payne knew many women would find irresistible, and generous brown eyes that gave the agreeable impression that the colonel was a man inclined to listen to you. Payne would have allowed himself to believe that Diaz and these four men were playing a very elaborate joke on him were it not for the undeniable sensation, like a racing pulse, of bad energy pumping through this room as, with Diaz's announcement of his mission, it had pumped through the car. The amazing thing was, something terrible was about to happen, but nobody seemed to be too put out by it.

Uncorking the bottle on the table, General Rivera asked Elliott Payne what was in his cup. "Drink it or throw it out," he said with too much gruff enthusiasm, but he took the cup itself and dumped its contents on the floor behind him. He refilled the cup halfway from the bottle and added equal amounts to the other glasses on the table, and then the general raised his own in the air, admiring its amber glow. The toast that Payne anticipated was not immediately forthcoming. Instead General Rivera wanted to say something about the rum he had poured, the privilege of its rare existence; it had been barreled in 1961 and tapped infrequently in the intervening years—once upon his promotion to flag officer and then his promotion to the military's chief of special operations, once upon his return to the island from Angola, once upon his son's birth, again on the boy's graduation from medical school, again upon his own retirement from the army and once more, today, to celebrate the life of his protégé, his adopted son, Bobby, the now middle-aged man he had mentored and trained to be an elite warrior of the revolution. Havana Club, the general declared reverently, from the most private of reserves, 40 years old, finer than the finest cognacs, the most excellent rum in the world. The general raised his glass higher.

"To Colonel Roberto Carlos Fernandez de Valdez and the triumph of the motherland."

"*Socialismo o muerte,*" said General Ocampo.

"*El Jefe,*" said the mulatto with an exaggerated gust like a sharp rap of fingers on a drum, and then all eyes turned to Fernandez to see what he would say.

"Viva Bacardi," he proclaimed to whoops of delight, the strained tone of their laughter striking Payne as increasingly artificial, somewhere low within it the hollow tones of doom. "*Salud,*" he managed, and everyone drank, sipping at the smooth golden fire of the rum, the officers making gentle savoring sounds of appreciation. Too readily the general refilled the glasses, placing the empty bottle on the floor where Payne now noticed a second bottle, also empty. He was not surprised by the revelation that in all likelihood these men were drunk, and here was the patriarch with a lopsided smile pulling a third bottle from a bag at his feet.

"*Compañero,* we were talking about Arturo Suarez," said Colonel Fernandez, focusing on Payne. "Do you know him?"

"No. I've read his books. One of them."

"He is one of the revolution's little dogs. These little dogs come running from all over the world to lick and play with the revolution. But now the revolution has no milk for them. Maybe they will go away."

General Ocampo said something, his voice like a xylophone, and Colonel Fernandez translated for the writer's benefit. "Ocampo says, 'Shit attracts flies, and revolutionists attract beautiful people.' Man, you would not believe the ass that Fidel gets. He does not fuck peasants, let me tell you."

"But who will dine with us if they go away?" said General Rivera, winking.

"You look old enough," said Colonel Fernandez, making an effort to sound reasoned and disinterested, but an escalation in the style of his speaking barely contained his hostility. "Did you serve in Vietnam?"

"No," said Payne. "I was too young."

"General Ocampo was my commander in Grenada, and General Rivera was my father's best friend. He has shrapnel in his body from when he tried to save my father's life in the Sierra Maestra. I've known him since I was a little boy. He is a Hero of the Revolution. *Coño,* we are all Heroes of the Revolution."

He repeated this in Spanish to his companions and they chuckled like crows, lighthearted and conspiratorial, except for the unnamed colonel who mirrored their humor with an edgy reluctance, forcing himself to be entertained by their secrets, so many secrets and subterfuges and lies required to ride the tiger of revolution that one was made giddy, apparently, by their profusion.

"I was born in Pinar del Río and grew up in Florida—Daytona, not Miami," said Colonel Fernandez, beginning to be visibly affected by the rum. He stopped abruptly and looked at Elliott Payne with piercing scrutiny. "Excuse me, why aren't you writing this down?"

"Right," said Payne, and from his bag he dug out a notebook and pen.

"I came home to the little country that told the big country to go fuck itself," Fernandez continued with incurable nostalgia, "and we must never apologize for that, never, not on earth and not in heaven. Do you believe we should apologize for that?"

"No."

"What should we apologize for?"

"Nothing. I don't know."

"My friend, what would you like to ask me?"

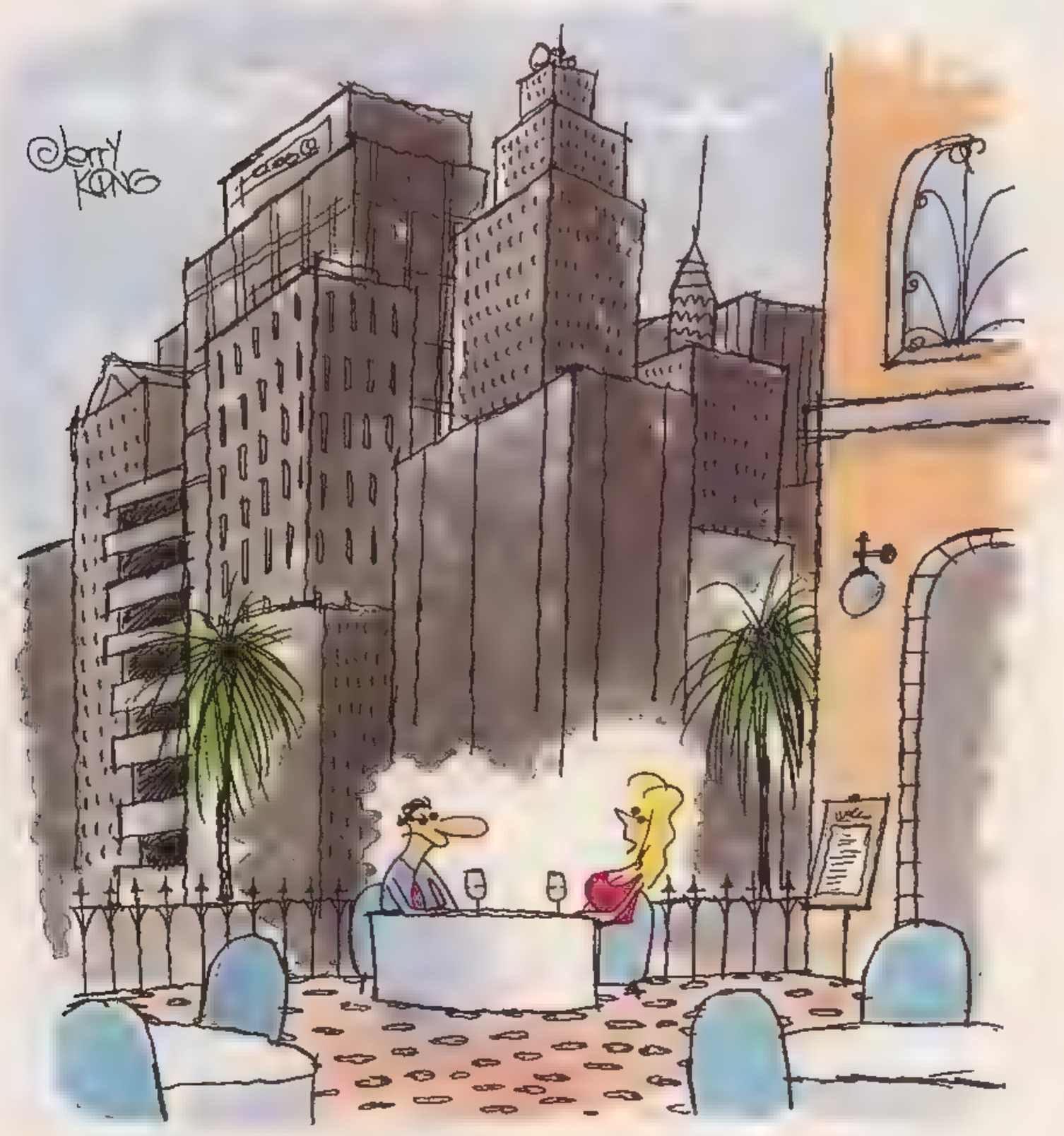
"Why are you being executed? It is you, isn't it?"

The colonel's expression was both mocking and arrogant, and he raised his eyebrows and pursed his lips clownishly and answered, "Economics."

"Okay," said Payne, not caring about an explanation. "And why am I here?"

"You," said the colonel with sly regard, "are my last request."

And yes, that was true, but only technically. Elliott Payne was not who the colonel had in mind when, in the depths of gloomy defiance from confinement elsewhere on the base, he had asked General Rivera to intercede with Castro on his behalf and permit a member of the foreign press to attend what tomorrow the Cuban press would describe with solemn, scorning righteousness as "the justice delivered to the traitor Colonel Fernandez for the unacceptable crime of narco-trafficking"; the colonel's rogue actions had "supplied arguments to the enemies of revolution." Drugs out, tourists in—that was the immediate and timely message to foreign investors, or at least the window dressing required to thwart Washington's opposition to Cuba's blooming sweetheart deals around the globe. "So he kills me," the colonel said now. "It's that simple." He had fallen from grace, a fatal condition for a man like Bobby Fernandez, in a place like Cuba. The colonel was a man of the world, specifically a man of the business world. He and his cadre of special operatives had kept this country going for much of the past decade when it would otherwise have disassembled and bobbed in the sea like so much ideological sewage. Which was the higher virtue, the purity of ideology or the impurity of survival, and who on the revolutionary council wanted to answer that? Most of what he had done, the important things, had been done without the chief's knowledge and assent, because he was and always had been and had no desire to be anything but a warrior in service of the revolution. He waged a clever form of sabotage against the colossus, the enemy's weakness transformed into Cuba's strength, helping the enemy rot from within, accelerating the natural process of imperial decay, but the problem was you couldn't feed enough poison to an enemy whose appetite for filth was boundless. In the end it was impractical and finally an embarrassment. Not even Castro would deny that the colonel had earned his right to petition, and he had allowed his honor to convince him that his request was justifiable and had let his vanity assume he would be attended in accord with his erstwhile status. With the chief's blessings, the colonel would be permitted to tell his story, unstained by



"I'll be appearing on the Dr. Phil show tomorrow. The topic is 'How to Deal With a Man Who's Bad in Bed.' But don't worry, I'll only use your first name."

the official version. And who was this man Elliott Payne? Someone from *The New York Times,* from *The Wall Street Journal,* someone credible and trustworthy, somebody from the *Financial Times,* from *The Guardian,* from *Le Monde,* from fucking *People* magazine, what did it matter? A mule whose only purpose in life was to freight the deeds and facts of the other men on his back. He was here, he had come to receive the unique gift of the experience that was Bobby Fernandez's heroic life, and it was his duty to respect that gift and share it with the universe.

The colonel calmed the gathering dread in his mind and drank down another glass of rum, the last gulp causing him to wheeze through a clenched jaw, and then he became eloquent and spoke to Elliott Payne, only to him. Payne guiltily wrote down every word he said, guilty yet in awe of the miracle of Bobby Fernandez, a living man on the verge of being swallowed by eternity, this miracle of talking to a dead man, in a sense the first knot in his own existence that he had encountered but could not untie.

"The possibilities of a revolution, like the possibilities of a man's life, become limited by the passage of time. You miss opportunities that will not return. You make small mistakes that develop into big mistakes, regrettable and unfixable errors, you misjudge the consequences of what you imagine are insignificant actions, you fail to imagine the best options, and you begin to lose companions who were necessary to your strength and acquire others who contribute to your weakness. A revolution is an act of unsurpassable will, but collective will. One man's will is not supreme enough, immortal enough, to carry the burden of people forward. And so——"

"*Basta.*"

The unnamed colonel looked at his gold wristwatch and stood up, straight and erect and foreboding. Had Fernandez gone too far, Payne wondered, or had the appointed hour simply arrived? General Rivera and General Ocampo seemed mildly aggrieved by this interruption, and Rivera frowned and clucked his tongue at the mulatto, as if to scold him for not understanding that Bobby Fernandez was entitled to this foolishness. The writer, still copying down the last sentence, experienced a pang of tenderness for the condemned man, but it felt dishonest; the whole goddamn performance was a radical imposition on his soul. Bobby Fernandez raised his head, an element of theatrics to his grim serenity, and his eyes passed across them glassily, all friends, all comrades, all as treacherous as himself. His eyes glistened, but he did not cry, and he did not lose his composure but became dignified and then pliant. He swayed to his feet, and then they took him out to the parade ground and shot him, drunk but steady and grinning crookedly with an insolence meant only to affirm his manhood, a small portable cassette player trembling in his hands and headphones wrapped over his ears beneath his peaked hat, nodding coolly at the blast of Jimi Hendrix into the final synaptic sequence of his brain. A soldier with a handheld video camera filmed it all.

When the bullets hit, Elliott Payne completely lost his equilibrium and felt his own knees buckle. He gasped as Fernandez gasped, and the impact threw the colonel's head back. He found himself unprepared for the shame and incomprehensibility of death, the instantaneous creepy calm of its aftermath. How could he be so shocked, why had he doubted these men would actually do what they had told him they would do? Seeing a man ritualistically shot, the morbid ceremony of a firing squad, was both too little and too much. He had not imagined the permanent stamp of its horror, and when his legs ceased quaking and he could walk again, he turned away from it, the spell of the ordeal not broken but just beginning. There was Diaz, mopping sweat from his brow with a handkerchief, then wiping his entire face with too much vigor, which for some reason disgusted Payne. He looked up at the sky, darkening with thunderheads, and when he looked back down, the two generals were in front of him, their faces stricken with the perfect calculation of sadness and pity. "You helped him," said General Rivera, squeezing Payne's shoulder. "You gave him comfort," the black general said in mournful Spanish.

"Yeah," said Elliott Payne. "You bet."

The two generals shambled away toward a waiting car, their faces drawn and shoulders sagging, men of distinction entangled by the vast embitterment of duty, complacent in victory and complicit in the murderous offense of the circumstances. Payne watched the odious mulatto approach Diaz and harangue the deputy and prod him across the grass toward the American writer while a pickup truck pulled onto the grounds and soldiers heaved the body of Bobby Fernandez into its bed. He stared at the sullen Diaz, his numbness untouched by the deputy's humiliation, thinking how well servility suited him.

"This man says something for you," Diaz sputtered, clumsy with his translation, and waited for the mulatto to continue, which he did with harsh, bright-eyed fury. "Okay," said Diaz. "He says that those two men could do something but did nothing." Diaz paused while the unnamed colonel machine-gunned him again with language, then turned to burn his eyes into Elliott Payne. "Okay, he says that Bobby Fernandez was theirs, but they would not"—he quickly turned to the mulatto for a clarification—"okay,

he says stand with him. Colonel Fernandez. You understand? They would not stand with him. What is the word?"

"Look, I don't care," said Payne. "Can I go now?"

The nameless colonel nodded at the writer, satisfied in his assumption that the truth had passed between them, but before he would release him he had a favor to ask. Bobby Fernandez had a habit that was not cocaine but a subtler passion, writing poetry, which he had rarely shown even to his comrades. The mulatto was holding a cheap vinyl portfolio clutched to his stomach, containing, he said, Fernandez's writings. He wanted Elliott Payne to take these and give them to the dead man's mother in Miami. The portfolio couldn't just be dropped in the mail, because there was no confirmed address, but surely Señor Payne could track her down and deliver this legacy. Please, said the deputy, distressed by the mulatto's insistence. Although Payne had no intention of following through on the request, he agreed just to get away from him, to get out of there.

On the ride back, the light began to fail and angry clouds scraped low over Havana, sending down columns of purple rain over the silenced barrios. Banks of steam erupted from the streets, wisps like puffs of smoke snagging in the treetops. For some reason his muscles, every one of them, ached as if he had been out on the high seas in a storm, his body tossed and pounded. Diaz cleared his throat once as if he might say something but didn't until minutes later when he cleared it again and asked the American, "How did you find Havana?" Even if Payne had wanted to talk, what could you say about Havana? Restless at the marina the previous night, he had asked his Cubanacán driver to take him to the old section of the city, down narrow cobbled alleys vaguely Neapolitan, to have a drink at Hemingway's old hangout La Bodeguita del Medio. Behind the counter, two bartenders manufactured endless mojitos, 20 at a time, for the relentless tide of thirsty Germans and Mexicans and Canadians that churned through, sweeping in and sweeping out, an unprecedented tide of tourists glancing cross-eyed at the ubiquitous graffiti and taking deep, dizzying whiffs of the pathos of bohemian Cuba. Across the street three plainclothes police officers stood like statuary, arms folded, glowering at the imported euphoria, and beyond them in the expansive darkness of the city all the pretty girls and boys of the revolution offering themselves for a meal or a bar of soap or a bottle of nail polish or the change in your pocket, and behind the doors of the city their cowed and disheartened parents, suspicious of one another, their lips glued by fear, and behind them Havana herself, an exotic passion permanently flaunting the edges of self-destruction, semi-feral but with hip intensity, sliding up to disaster and then fluttering away, a city like a Latin woman, beautiful but exhausted, dancing through the perfumed night with a gun in her hand, her destiny rehabilitated this very afternoon—by what? This cleansing of a state like a whore's bath, a quick wipe between the legs and let the next customer into the parlor? But he didn't feel like telling Diaz any of this, so he said nothing but closed his eyes and didn't open them again until the Mercedes stopped and the driver opened the door and Diaz took his elbow again to say, "You know this man Fernandez, he was *escoria*—scum, a psychopath," and he was back at the marina, stepping through the puddles to the bar, looking for a waste can where he could toss the portfolio. He heard clapping behind the hedges of oleander, feedback on a microphone, the wooden cadence of someone reading a speech.

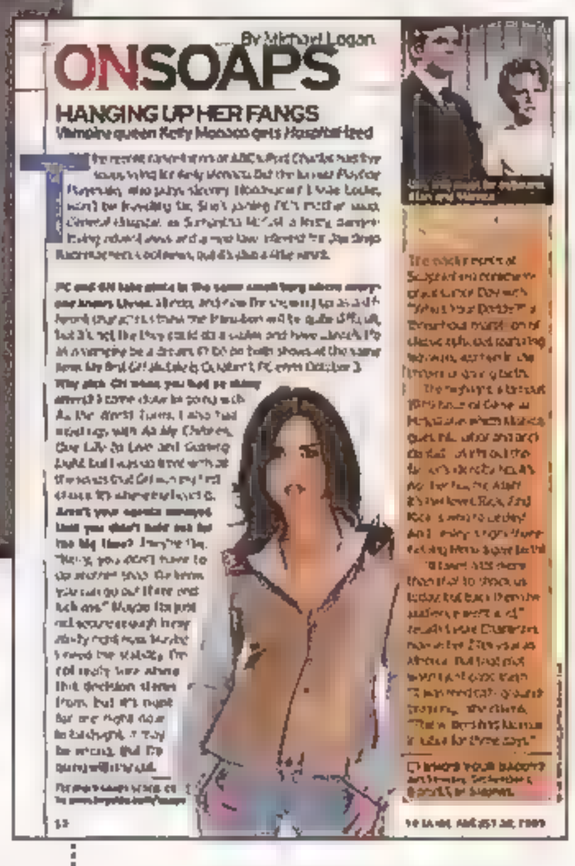
An hour later he was still nursing the same beer when the men from the *Cerebella* found him there. "My boy Payne, where have you been?" Doc Billy said, braying at him like a jackass. "You missed it. They gave me an award," and that was lovely, wasn't it, the artful resiliency of the revolution, taking everyone by the elbow, whispering its grim seduction. How could it not, after all, have given him something, however small, that would be remembered.

"Well! And a very happy Valentine's Day to you, too, Miss Finch!"

PLAYMATE NEWS

AFTERNOON DELIGHT

When the ABC soap opera *Port Charles* was cancelled last year, five other shows jumped at the chance to move star Kelly Monaco to their fictional, melodrama-saturated towns. Kelly—who was nominated for a Daytime Emmy for her role as vampire Livvie Locke—chose to stay close to her roots: She moved across the lot to *PC*'s mother show, *General Hospital,* where she now plays Samantha McCall. Kelly, who has appeared on *Baywatch* and *Spin City* and in the movies *Idle Hands* and *Mumford,* was not jobless for long. "I had no idea the feedback I would get would be so enormous," Kelly told *TV Guide*. "You never know what people's reactions will be toward you as an actor when the boat sinks. You think, That's it; I'm done. But thankfully I had offers coming in from every direction." Die-hard soap watchers (read: junkies) who were afraid of losing their daily Kelly fix can breathe easy, because her character has already become a major part of long-running *GH*. "Samantha is a feisty free spirit," Kelly has said. "I was offered a lot of other characters who were similar to Livvie—the vixen and the villain. I wanted to branch away from that. Right now Samantha is in the middle of a great romantic comedy. There's a lot of dry humor. We didn't want to jump right into a love story. We want to build something stable for Samantha and Jax." (Apparently that's a name in soap opera land.) A love story? Does that mean we'll see partially nude love scenes? We say set the Tivo and fast-forward to the good parts.


By Michael Logan

ONSOAPS

HANGING UP HER FANGS

Vampire queen Kelly Monaco gets Hospitalized

If you've never seen *General Hospital,* here's what you're missing: star Kelly Monaco. Above: her recent *TV Guide* feature.

10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Julie Cialini is one of the zillion models who swear they were ugly ducklings as kids. We're skeptical,

but here's her take: "High school was clannish. I was never part of the crowd." As it should be for all misfits turned Playmates, when she went to her reunion "all eyes were on me." Take that, homecoming queen.

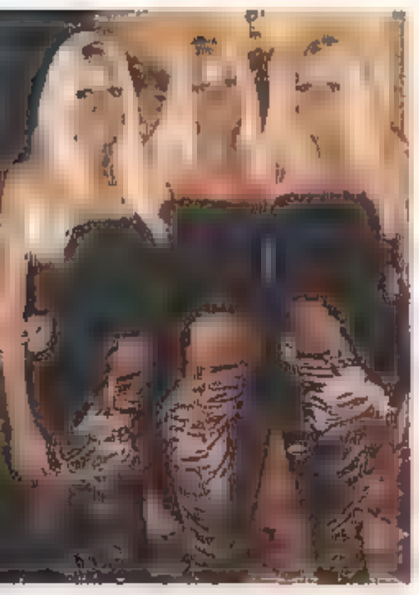
LOOSE LIPS

"If people knew how KFC treats chickens, they'd never eat another drumstick. I am calling for a boycott of all KFC restaurants until my friends at PETA tell me that you have agreed to be kinder in your practices." Pamela Anderson, in a letter [illegible] Brandz, a company that owns KFCs

PLAYMATE PDAS

HOT SHOT

THREE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE DAHMS



1. Before Erica, Nicole and Jaclyn were born, their mom didn't know that she was having triplets—she thought she was having twins. "Our heartbeats were in sync," says Jaclyn. "After the first two came out, our mom was like, 'There's another one in there.'"

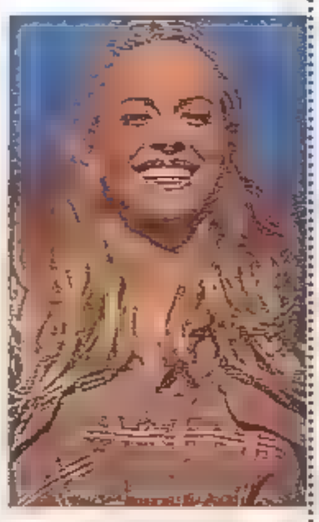
2. When they were eight, they did a Hardee's commercial with triplet boys.

3. It took five weeks to shoot their December 1998 pictorial. Then they spent a month in L.A. taping segments for Playboy TV and filming their Playmate home video.

POP QUESTIONS: DIVINI RAE

Q: What were you like in high school?

A: Friendly, studious and involved. I was editor of the paper and an honors student.



Q: Did you have a lot of boyfriends?

A: I wasn't allowed to date. When people found out I had posed they were shocked. They remember a conservative girl.

Q: What else might shock them?

A: When Howard Stern asked me if I like anal sex, I told the truth: I do. I also told the truth about how many partners I've had: I can count them on one hand.

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Andrew W.K.

"Redheads are cool because they're rare. **Heather Carolin** is almost a mini Nicole Kidman. On her Data Sheet she said that she wanted a 1967 Chevy Camaro SS. I was like, 'What if I bought it for her?' My friend said, 'If you're buying her a car, can you get me a new set of tires?' His car had broken down. That put it back into perspective."

VICTORIA PULLS A SHARON

For those who pause the Sharon Stone leg-crossing scene in *Basic Instinct*, here's a better visual. Left: Goddess Victoria Silvstedt. Is she wearing underpants? Middle: Nope, no underpants. Right: Victoria on her way to a party. She is not, in fact, wearing underpants.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Remember when Yankees third baseman **Aaron Boone** hit the homer that put his team into the World Series? Not only did he get his photo on the front page of every New York City newspaper, he also got to go home to his wife, Playmate **Laura Cover**....**Christina Santiago** and **Pennelope Jimenez** (below) were interviewed by Fox TV at the Magic fashion trade show in Los Angeles....**Stacy**

LEROY NEIMAN

Christina and Pennelope rock the mike.

Fuson pops up in the Kelsey Grammer film *The Good Humor Man*....**Carmella DeCesare, Lani Todd** and **Ulrika Ericsson** (below) all hung out together at the Trans World Entertainment convention in New York City....**Carrie Stevens, Audra Lynn, Julie McCullough, Serria Tawan, Ava Fabian** and **Stephanie Heinrich** are some of the Centerfolds who played for charity on the game show *Street Smarts*....**Brande Roderick** has

Are you thinking what we're thinking?

roles in three movies: *Dracula II: Ascension, Out of Control* and the one we're dying to see, *Starsky & Hutch,* starring **Ben Stiller** and **Owen Wilson.** Because she's hot, and because apparently this is what hot girls do, Brande also has her own calendar. Get it at branderoderick.com.

PLAYBOY on the scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

THE GREAT INDOORS

Hey, cut yourself some slack. In the thick of February—the iciest, most suicide-friendly month of the year—there's no better time to skip out on your plans, kick back in your castle with your favorite naked girl and indulge in some peace and quiet. What could beat a 27-year-old single malt accompanied by some prime space-monster slaughter from the new *Alien* nine-disc DVD boxed set ($99, pictured below)? Pour a tall one from our bar of this winter's new liquors, power up these home-theater components, and toast to the recline of Western civilization.

GEORGE GEORGIOU

Above left: New libations this season include (from left) Miller's Reformed London Dry gin (80 proof, $29); Ikon Russian vodka (80 proof, $14); Pappy Van Winkle's Family Reserve bourbon (95.6 proof, $200); Glenmorangie Vintage 1977 single malt scotch (86 proof, $250); Santa Teresa 1796 Antiguo de Solera Venezuelan rum (80 proof, $35). Above: DirecTV HD DVR with Tivo service (top, $99), the first high-definition digital video recorder; a 250 GB hard drive records 30 hours of high-definition footage. Pioneer Elite DV-59AVi (bottom, $1,600), the first component that can tackle CDs, DVDs, Super Audio CDs and DVD Audio discs. Left: Sony KF-42WE610 42-inch LCD rear-projection TV ($2,500), an HD-ready digital number that kicks ass for the price.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 148

Grapevine

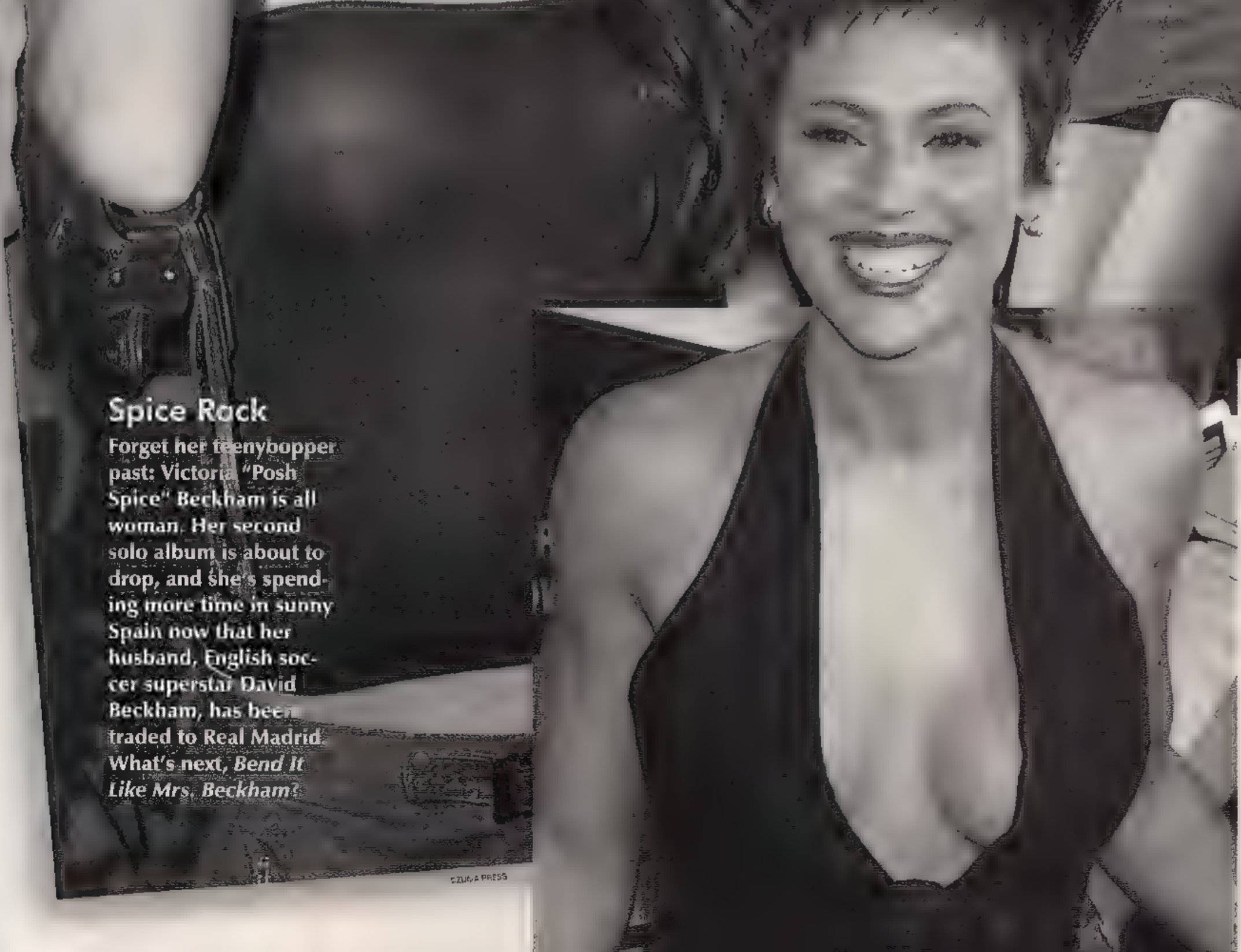
Ashanti Backs That Thing Up

Ashanti (grooving in Atlanta, below) has sold 5 million albums, bagged a Grammy and released a second smash, *Chapter II*. So is she digging the spotlight? Kind of. "The industry is full of sharks," she says. "You have to rise above it."

© KEVON MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM

Spice Rack

Forget her teenybopper past: Victoria "Posh Spice" Beckham is all woman. Her second solo album is about to drop, and she's spending more time in sunny Spain now that her husband, English soccer superstar David Beckham, has been traded to Real Madrid. What's next, *Bend It Like Mrs. Beckham*?



CZUDA PRESS

Charmed, We're Sure

Let's not think about the Alyssa Milano who played Samantha, the jailbait also known as Tony Danza's TV daughter. So where should one's mind wander? To the *Charmed* star getting ready for this Los Angeles movie premiere. In the room were just Milano, a black dress and some lucky double-stick tape.

FRED PROUSER/REUTERS/LANDOV

© FERNANDO SALAS/ZUMA PRESS

Alien Resurrection

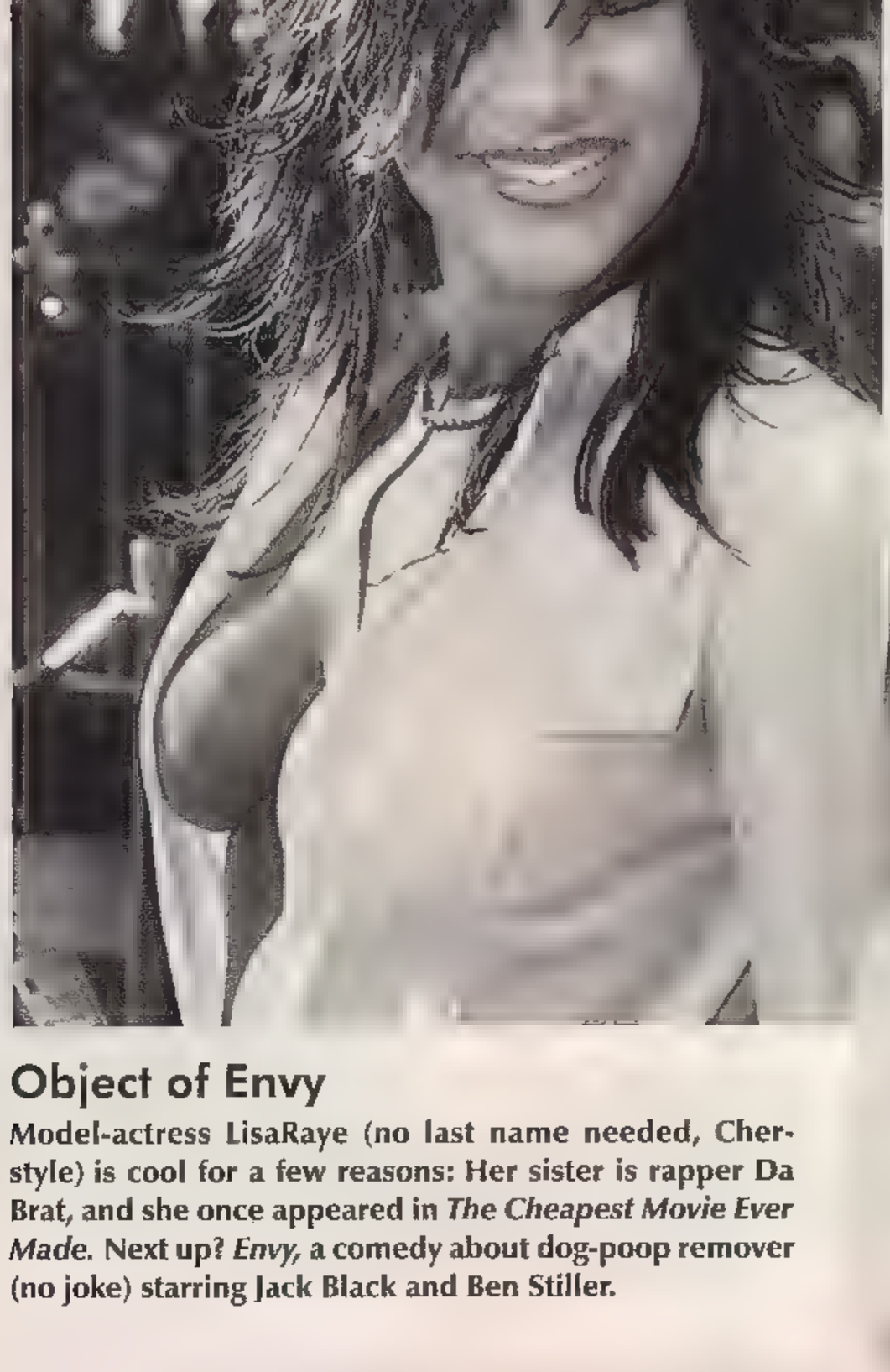
TruANT, **Alien Ant Farm's first record since the band's devastating May 2002 bus crash, is all about quirky rock anthems and livin' it up. Don't worry if you can't get tickets to see them live—their single, "These Days," is featured in the game *Madden NFL 2004*.**

The Newlywed Game

Dear MTV reality star Jessica Simpson: We don't care whether you know how to do laundry or that Chicken of the Sea is actually tuna—we like you because you're really hot. And when our girlfriends flip the channel to *Newlyweds,* we only pretend to hate it.

PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC.

VINCE CAVATAIO



Gidget Goes to Jersey

"The last thing I wanted to be was a model," says (surprise!) model Tawni Mychaels, a surfer chick who was born in Hawaii and now causes waves in New Jersey. We've seen her before, in *Muscle & Fitness* magazine, but we prefer this angle.

Object of Envy

Model-actress LisaRaye (no last name needed, Cher-style) is cool for a few reasons: Her sister is rapper Da Brat, and she once appeared in *The Cheapest Movie Ever Made.* Next up? *Envy,* a comedy about dog-poop remover (no joke) starring Jack Black and Ben Stiller.

Potpourri

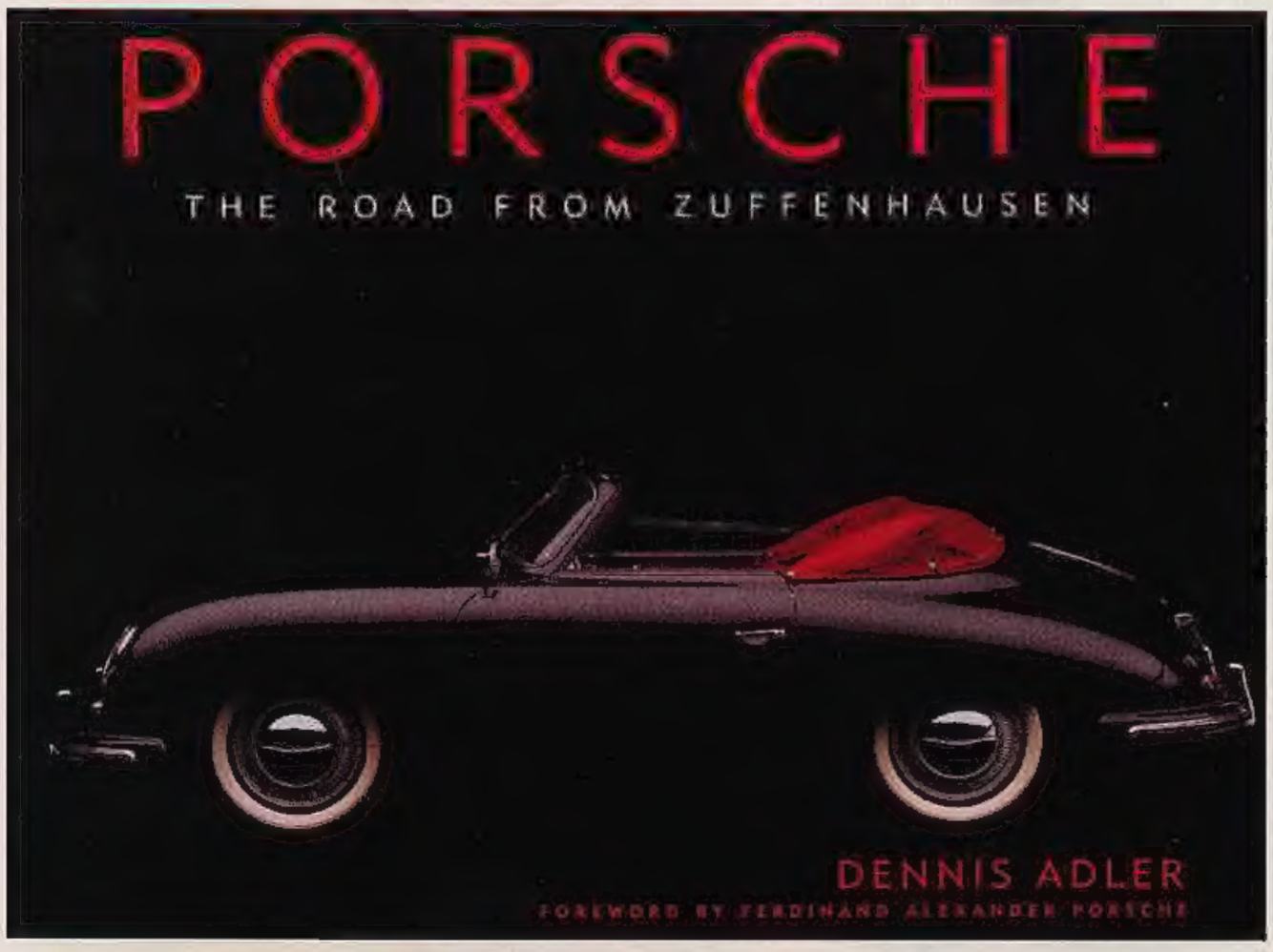
February's SEX HIT

FEELING FRESH?

Pleasure Wipes "are the answer for modern living," according to the company. While we have no idea what that means, we can give these vanilla- or mango-scented wipes (we prefer the latter) the thumbs-up. They are meant to "refresh" the body before and after a romp, and they're alcohol-free—safe to use on those sensitive spots. A tub of 25 (below) costs $7. Order yours from pleasurewipes.com.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Most people who chanced upon an aeronautical graveyard scattered across the Sonoran Desert in Arizona would have come to the same conclusion: What a freakin' mess! But designer Giancarlo de Astis had other ideas. De Astis created a line of furniture—desks, chairs, lamps—from junked airplane parts. He built the Il Sole conference table ($9,000) out of a jet engine and a burl walnut base. Fly over to deastisdesigns.com to see the collection.



WHEELS OF FORTUNE

The first Porsche, a Type 356-1, tore up Austrian tarmacs in 1948. Ever since, the company has been pumping out some of the world's sexiest street screamers—Speedsters, 924s, 928s, Boxsters, Spyders, Carreras. The 911 has survived for more than four decades, the longest single production of any postwar auto design in the world. Dennis Adler's hardcover history (Random House, $75) will fill you in on all the details. It has a foreword by Ferdinand Alexander Porsche III, who heads up Porsche Design and sits on the company's board of directors (busy guy). More important, the book's got color photos galore. Steer clear of the urge to read it while hightailing down an open road.

PARTY IN YOUR POCKET

One thing your mother should've taught you: Never go anywhere without a fully loaded bar. Not even to the bathroom. You never know when you'll desire a drink. The Wine Companion from Tool Logic ($25) has a corkscrew, a foil cutter, a can-and-bottle opener, a knife for lemons and limes, a fork for olives and a cocktail stirrer. And the whole thing is the size of a credit card. Order up at toollogic.com. Booze and dames not included.

DIE ANOTHER DAY

Actor Desmond Llewelyn played Q, 007's spy-gear inventor, in most of the Bond movies. Need a rocket-launching BMW or a fountain pen machine gun? He's still your guy. Llewelyn died in 1999, but California-based Sideshow Collectibles has brought him back to life in the form of a 12-inch plastic statue ($50). The new Q has 30 joints, comes in an actual tweed suit and carries a briefcase full of spy gizmos. Bonus: Pull his leg and he explodes! Just kidding. Order at sideshowcollectibles.com.

RETRO REBOUND

The original Mattel handheld basketball game came out in the 1980s. Instead of chasing girls, you sat and played with yourself, maneuvering those little red dots up and down the court. ("Hey, that red dot resembles Larry Bird, only it's better looking!") The new classic version ($13) has the same funky look and retro feel of the original but with one important improvement: A three-point line has been added. Score! It's video gaming like it ought to be—completely devoid of any skill, intelligence or coordination.

SNOW BALLS

To mark our 50th anniversary, Playboy hooked up with some of the world's great consumer visionaries to create products and fashion items featuring the iconic Rabbit: watches from Dunhill, skateboards from Tony Hawk and the Burton-produced Playboy Custom 58 snowboard ($550), a limited-edition beauty that's built for half-pipes and slopes alike. If you've ever dreamed of riding a hot snow bunny hard right on a slope, here's your big chance. Head over to burton.com.

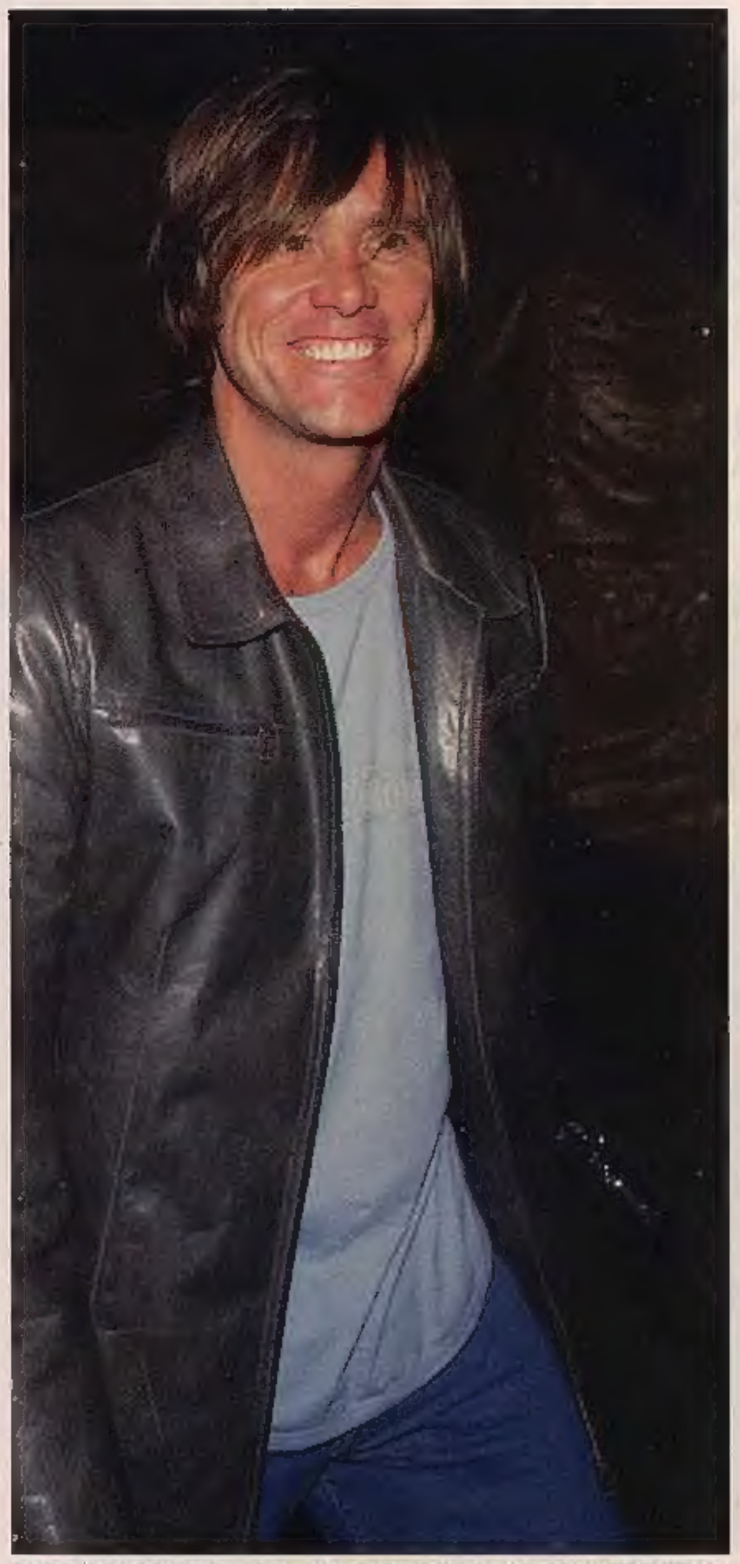
FRONT-ROW SEAT

The average man will spend roughly eight years of his life widening his ass in front of a TV. You might as well treat yourself to a comfortable seat. The Matinee, La-Z-Boy's first home theater collection, tilts you back at a 15-degree angle for optimum viewing. The chair comes with a drink holder and a snack tray and is available in dozens of fabrics and colors ($600 to $1,900 per chair). The only negative about this throne: having to get out of it. Trust us. More info at lazboy.com.

THE GREEN FAIRY

Absinthe has suffered from bad PR. Could it be because the authentic stuff made with wormwood back in the 19th century was toxic and said to drive folks insane? Genuine absinthe was outlawed in the U.S. in 1912, and it's still illegal to sell it here. But you can get a bottle of Czech absinthe from the British firm Sebor Absinth ($80, 110 proof) at seborabsinth.com. The pour: Dump a shot in a glass, then dissolve a sugar cube in water and add. Or drink it straight—at your own risk.

Next Month



RUBBERFACE REVEALED: JIM CARREY'S *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW.*

HE'S TWISTED, AND WE LIKE IT. CHUCK PALAHNIUK FICTION.

MISS MARCH: HUBBA HUBBY!

TORRIE VS. SABLE: NAKED SMACKDOWN.

WWE SUPERVIXENS—GET IN THE RING AS WE PIN DOWN WRESTLING'S HOTTEST PINUPS—AND BEST-SELLING PLAYBOY ALUMS—TORRIE WILSON AND SABLE FOR A SPECIAL (NUDE!) FACE-OFF. IT'S THE ULTIMATE CATFIGHT—AND YOU'VE GOT A FRONT-ROW SEAT

JIM CARREY—THE PLANET'S MOST PLIABLE MOVIE STAR SPOKE TO US FOR HOURS—AND HE DIDN'T TALK OUT OF HIS BUTT ONCE! THE FUNNYMAN GETS SERIOUS ABOUT TINSELTOWN'S FREAKINESS, HIS HOLLYWOOD LOVE LIFE, THE DOWNSIDE OF MAKING $20 MILLION A MOVIE AND HIS NEW PROJECT, *ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND.* PLAYBOY INTERVIEW BY **MICHAEL FLEMING**

A DOG'S LIFE—WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T CALL DUANE "DOG" CHAPMAN A BAIL-ENFORCEMENT AGENT. HE'S THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS BOUNTY HUNTER, THE GUY WHO SNAGGED THE MAX FACTOR RAPIST AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS. WE GO ON A MIDNIGHT RUN TO FIND OUT HOW A GUY WHO DID HARD TIME IN A TEXAS CLINK ENDED UP ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAW. BY **KENT BLACK**

WEIRD COLLECTORS—GET READY FOR THE OBSESSIVE, FASCINATING, SOMETIMES SCARY WORLD OF HARD-CORE PACK RATS. THEIR PRIZED COLLECTIONS OF MEMORABILIA, BARF BAGS, CORKSCREWS, USED POLICE CARS, SPARK PLUGS, SAND AND SERIAL-KILLER ART MAY BE WORTH MILLIONS ON EBAY. OR NOT

MUD LUST—YOU'VE BEEN TRAPPED INSIDE ALL WINTER, AND NOW THE GROUND IS STARTING TO THAW. YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS—OFF-ROADING! WE TRACK DOWN THE BEST TRUCK, MOTORCYCLE AND MOUNTAIN BIKE FOR TEARING THROUGH THE TERRAIN

WILLIAM PETERSEN—THE *CSI* STAR HAS A STRONG STOMACH FROM DEALING WITH THE HIT FORENSIC SHOW'S CREEPY CRAWLIES, AND STRONG WORDS FOR SHOWBIZ'S OTHER LOWER LIFE-FORMS. WE INVESTIGATE WHY HE DID JAIL TIME—AND WHO HE WOULD MOST LIKE TO CAST AS A GUEST CORPSE. 20 QUESTIONS BY **STEPHEN REBELLO**

GUTS—THE GUY WHO WROTE *FIGHT CLUB* BRINGS US FICTION ABOUT SEX. TWISTED, BIZARRE SEX. WOULD YOU EXPECT ANYTHING LESS? BY **CHUCK PALAHNIUK**

PLUS: A CLOSER LOOK AT PLAYBOY'S CYBER GIRLS, CAMPAIGN STUNTS RUN AMOK, UNDER THE COVERS WITH **CHRISTI SHAKE,** DRESSING UP WITH SPRING SUITS AND UNDRESSING WITH MISS MARCH, **SANDRA HUBBY**

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